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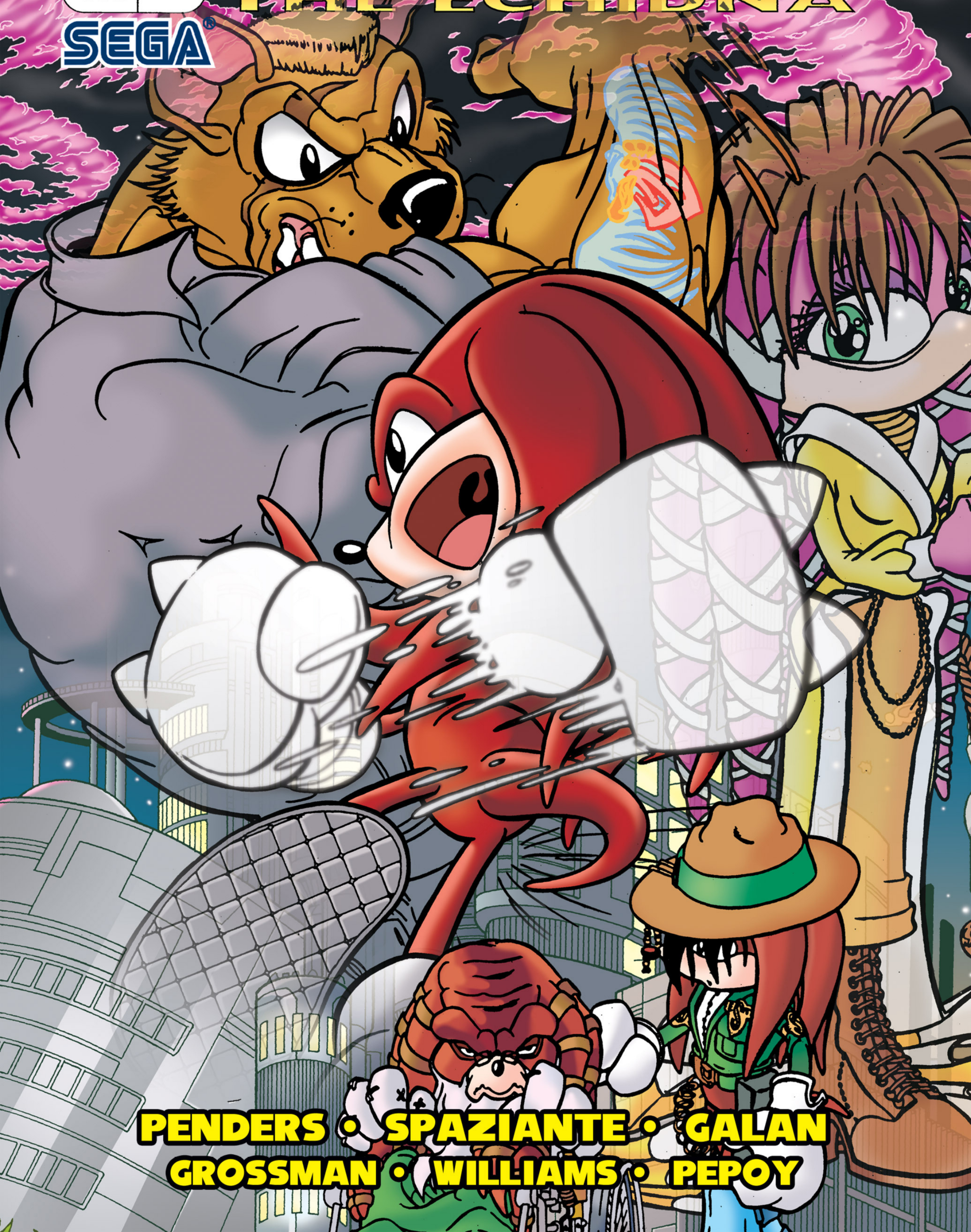
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**SEGA**

# KNUCKLES™

## THE ECHIDNA



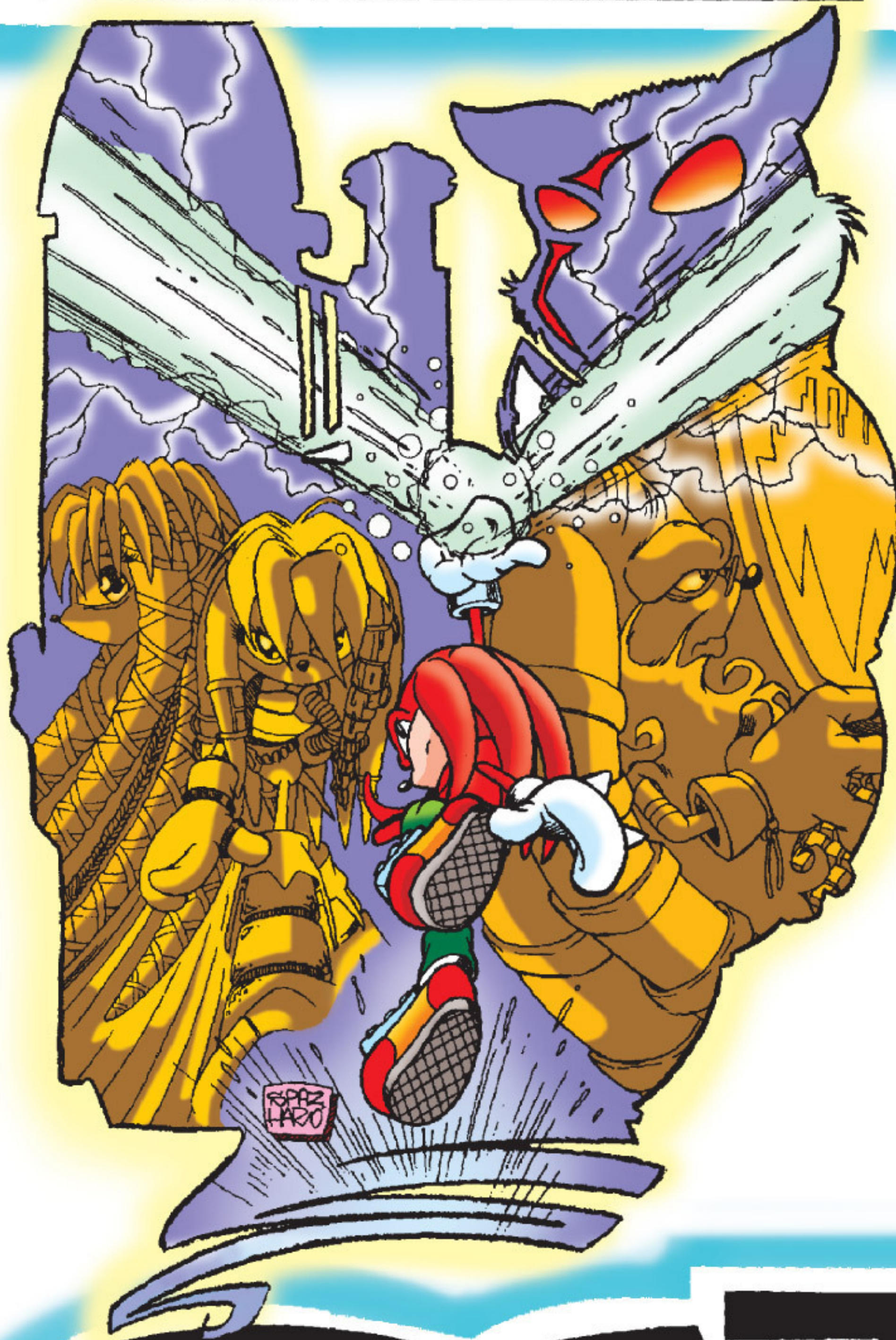
**PENDERS • SPAZIANTE • GALAN  
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# KNUCKLES™

THE ECHIDNA

BOOK SIX



# LOST PARADISE

PART THREE OF THREE

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**THERE IS NO BOND STRONGER THAN THAT BETWEEN A PARENT AND A CHILD. IT BEGINS WITH THE FIRST MOMENTS OF BREATH, WHEN A NEWBORN INFANT ENTERS INTO THE WORLD AND IS DEPENDENT UPON ITS PARENTS FOR ITS VERY SURVIVAL. WITH THE DEPENDENCY COMES UNQUESTIONING OBEDIENCE AND LOVE IN RETURN.**

**BECAUSE THE CHILD'S FORTUNES ARE SO LINKED WITH WHATEVER BEFALLS THE PARENTS, AS THE CHILD BEGINS TO GROW AND LEARN ABOUT HIS SURROUNDINGS, HE, AT FIRST, ACCEPTS MUCH OF WHAT HE SEES AS THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH. IT IS ONLY WHEN THE CHILD BEGINS TO DEVELOP THE CAPACITY TO SEE BEHIND THE SO-CALLED TRUTHS, THAT HE BEGINS TO SEEK THE REAL ANSWERS.**

**KNUCKLES HAS BEGUN TO QUESTION THAT WHICH HE HAS LEARNED AND EXPERIENCED. BEYOND THE QUESTION, THOUGH, IS ONE SIMPLE BASIC TRUTH THAT STANDS BEFORE ALL ELSE. NO MATTER WHAT HAS GONE ON BEFORE, HE LOVES HIS PARENTS ABOVE ALL ELSE, EVEN IF HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THEIR ESTRANGED RELATIONSHIP.**

**WITH HIS MOTHER NOW IN HARM'S WAY, KNUCKLES IS READY TO DO WHAT ANY SON WOULD DO, EVEN AT THE COST OF HIS OWN LIFE...**





I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU GUYS, BUT I FEEL STUPID JUST CHILLIN' AROUND HERE!

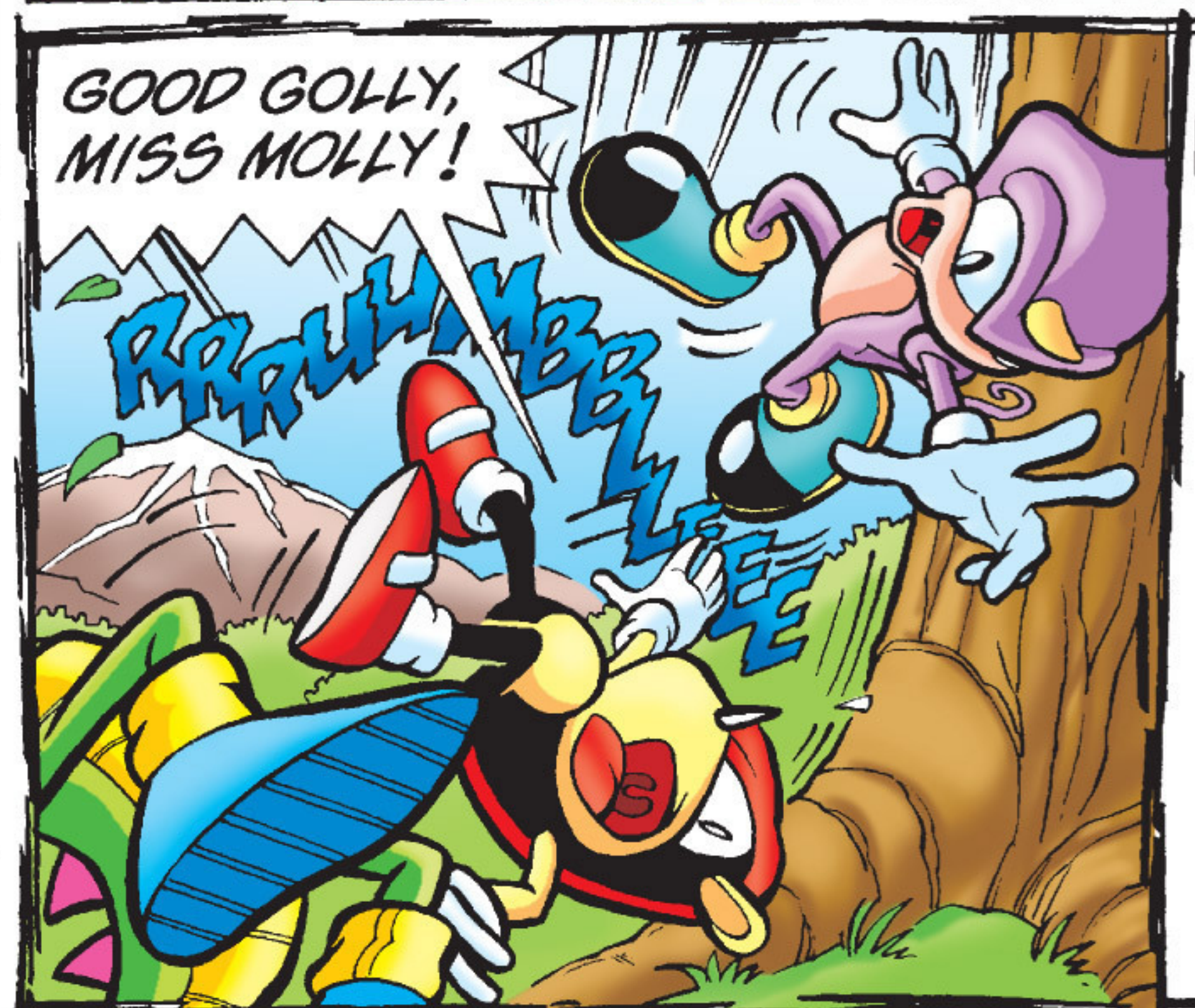
SINCE WE HAVEN'T HEARD FROM KNUCKLES YET, WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?



YOU KNOW HE'S DEPENDING ON US TO HOLD DOWN THE FORT UNTIL HE GETS BACK!

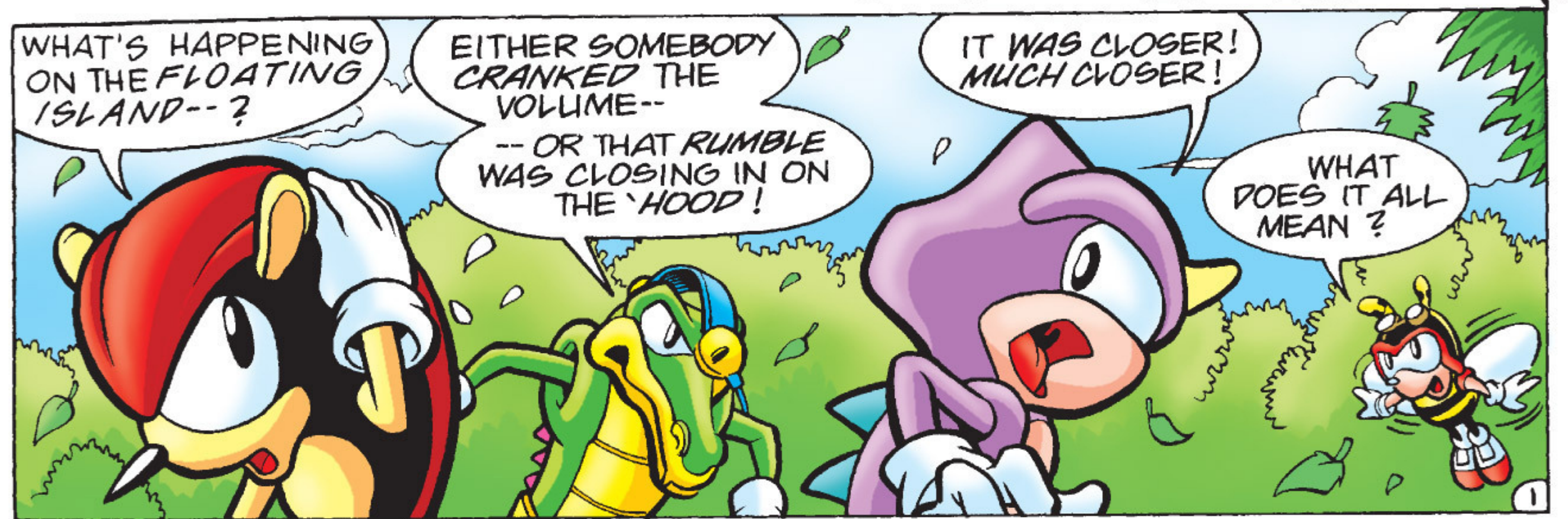
IF HE GETS BACK!

I THINK KNUCKLES IS BEING SNOWED BY THAT WITCH HE'S WITH!



GOOD GOLLY, MISS MOLLY!

RRRUMBLE  
LIFE



WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FLOATING ISLAND--?

EITHER SOMEBODY CRANKED THE VOLUME--  
--OR THAT RUMBLE WAS CLOSING IN ON THE 'HOOD!

IT WAS CLOSER! MUCH CLOSER!

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?



"I DON'T KNOW, BUT I'D PLAY ODDS KNICKLES DOES."

**BAMF!**

ALRIGHT!  
TIME TO KICK SOME  
DINGO BU--

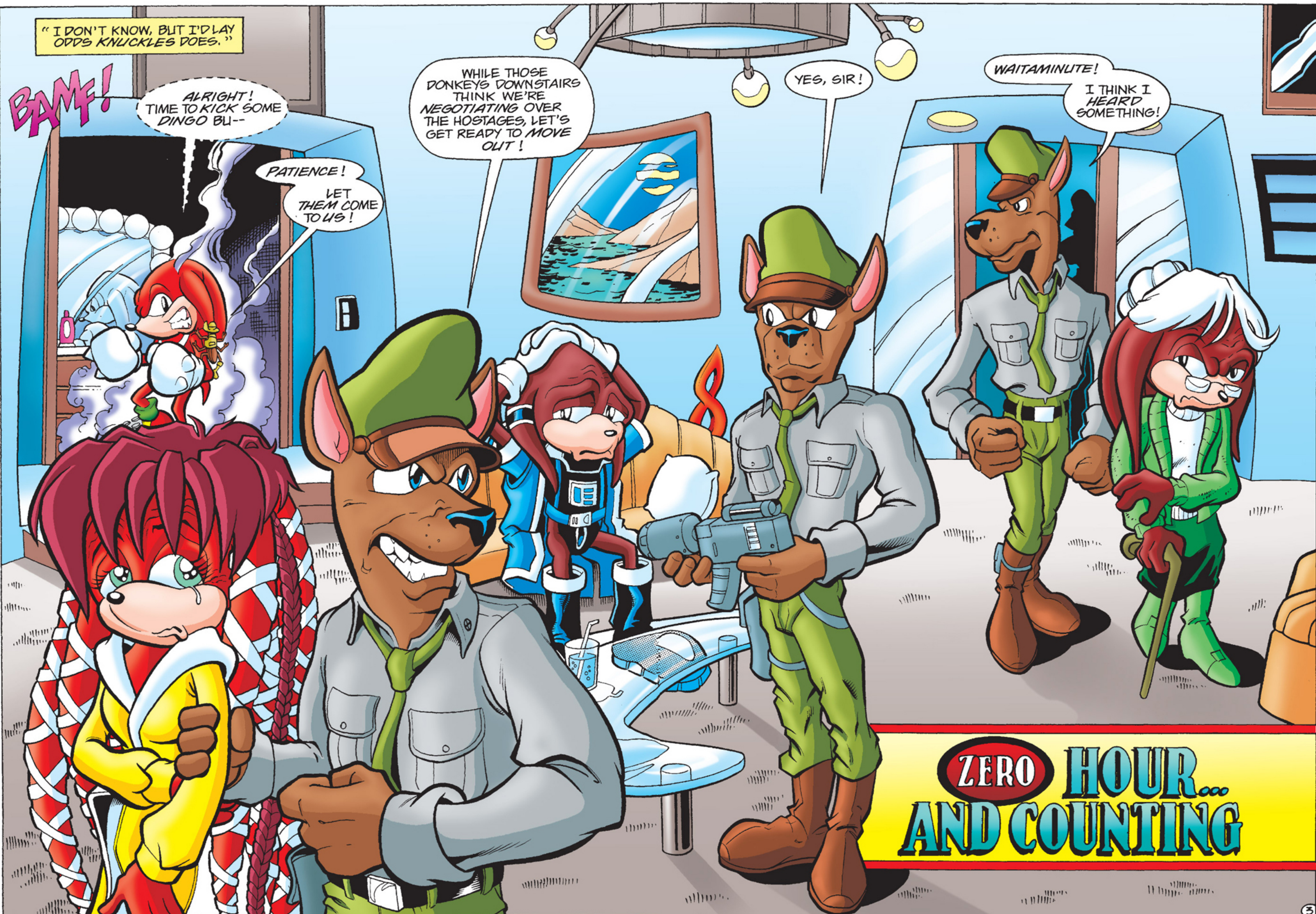
PATIENCE!  
LET  
THEM COME  
TO US!

WHILE THOSE  
DONKEYS DOWNSTAIRS  
THINK WE'RE  
NEGOTIATING OVER  
THE HOSTAGES, LET'S  
GET READY TO MOVE  
OUT!

YES, SIR!

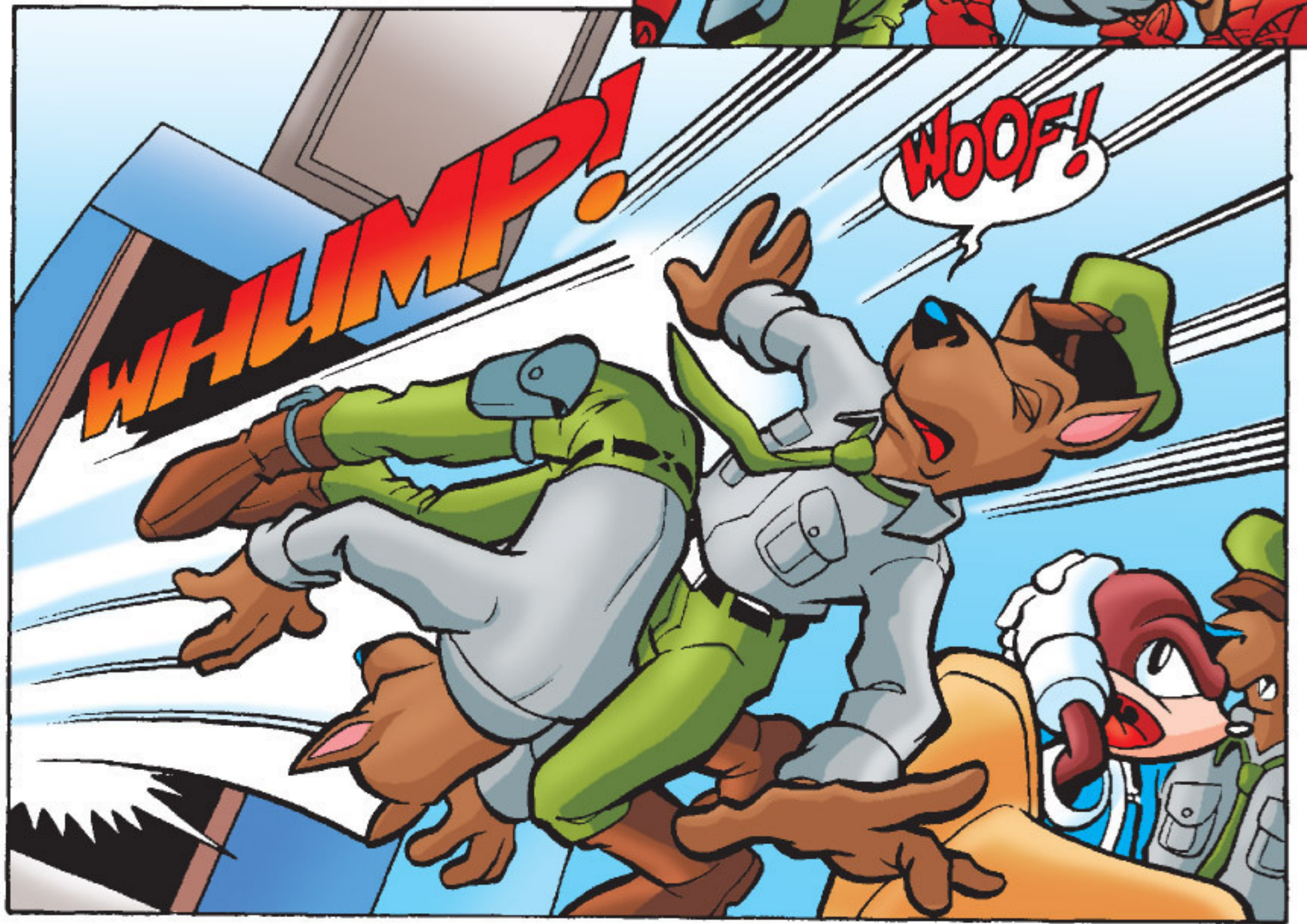
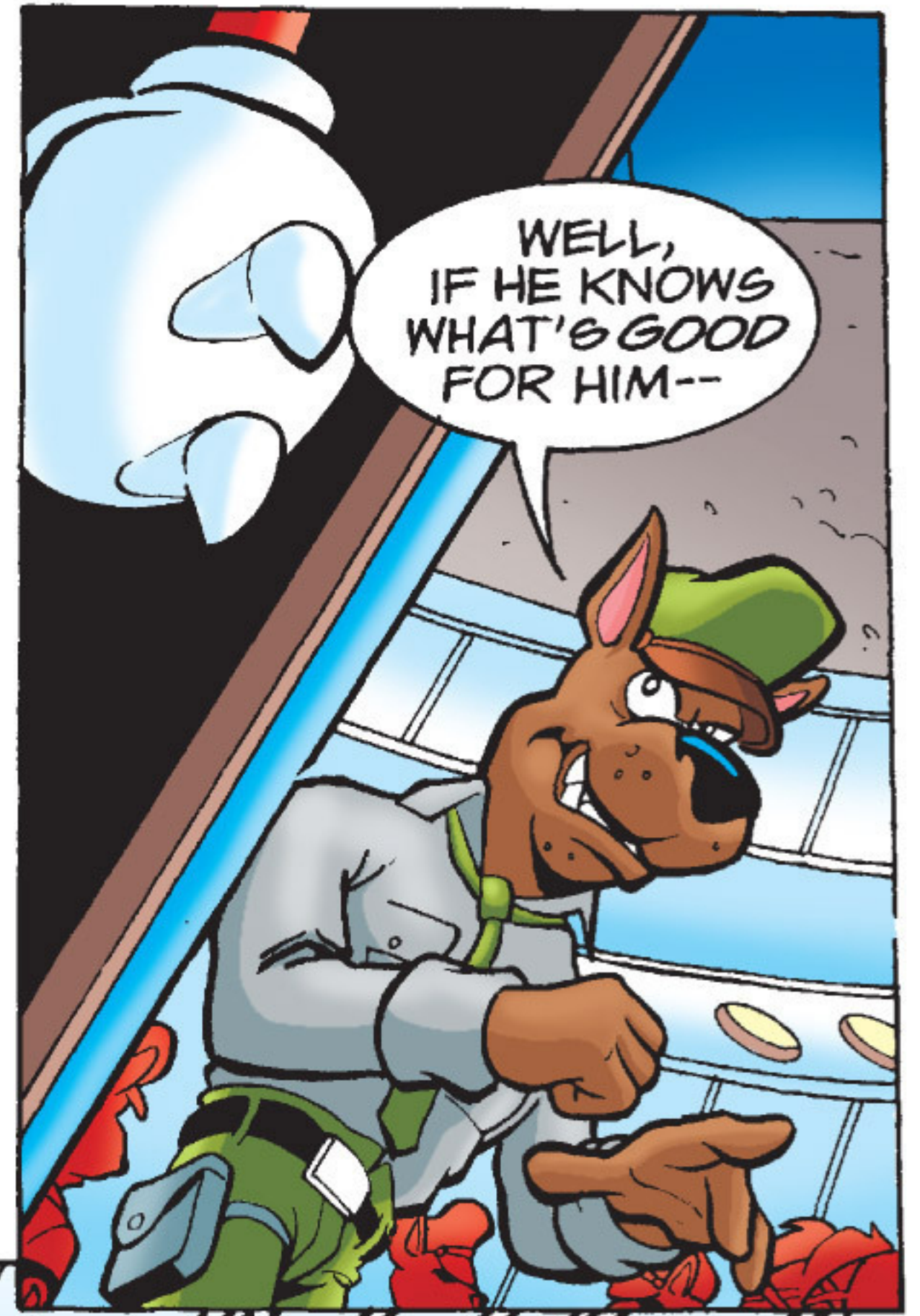
WAITAMINUTE!

I THINK I  
HEARD  
SOMETHING!

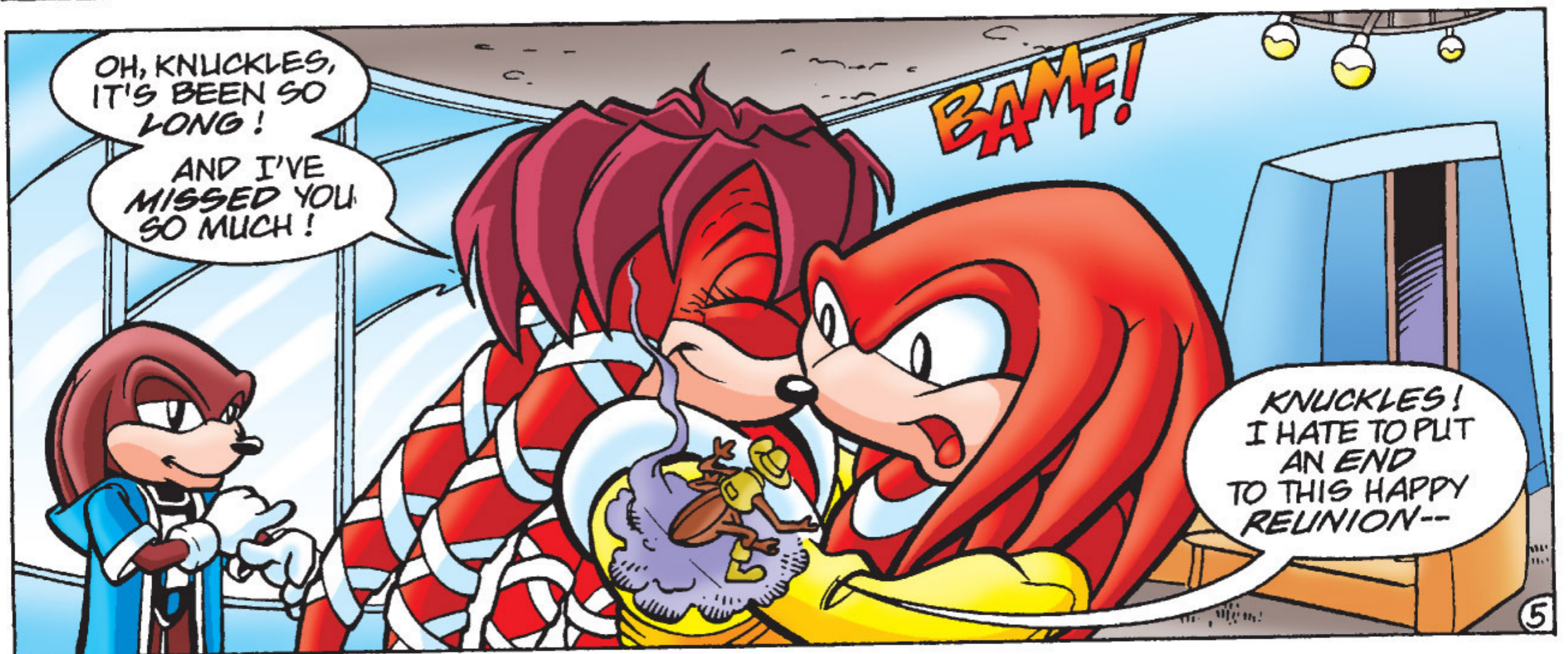
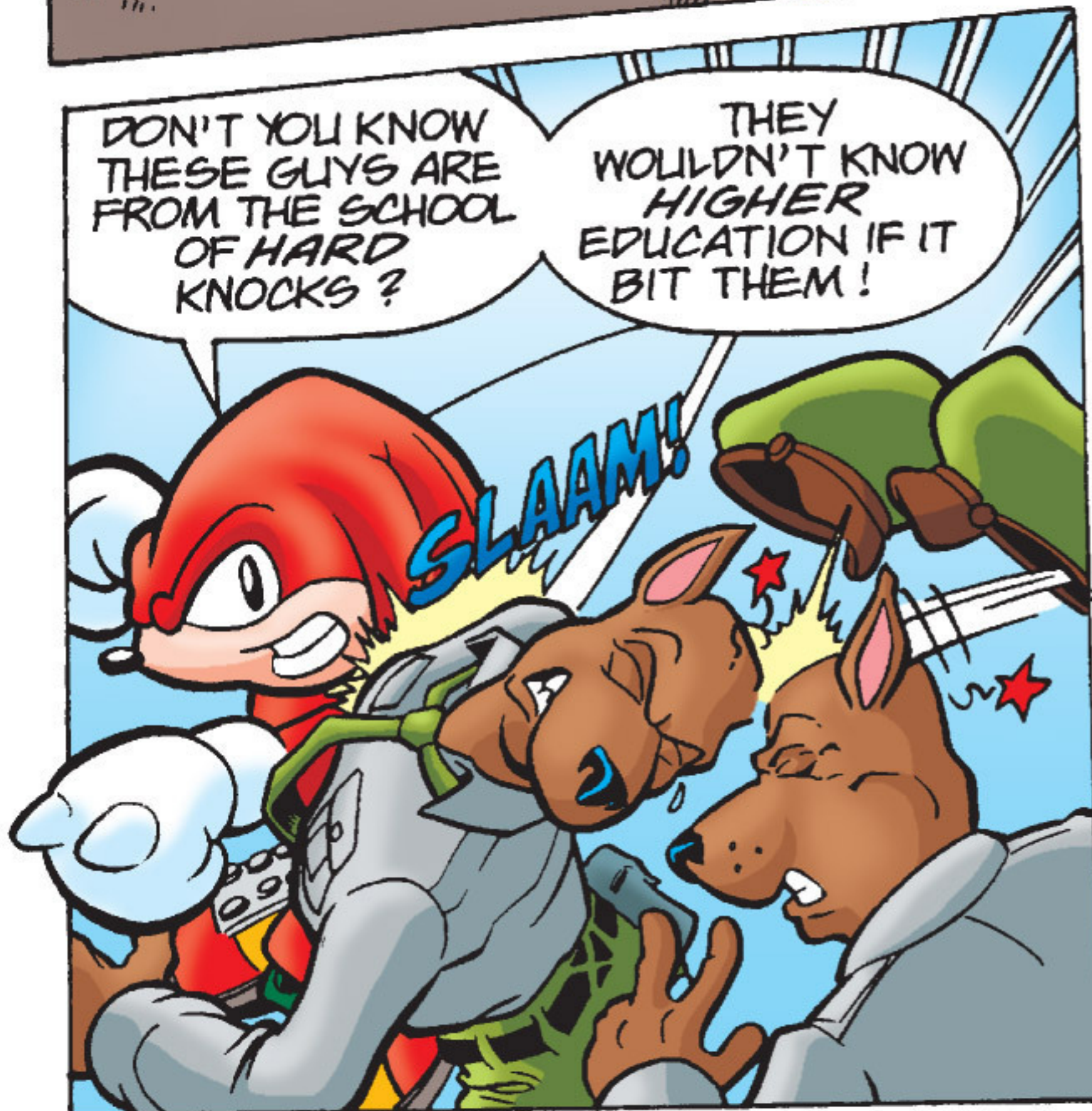
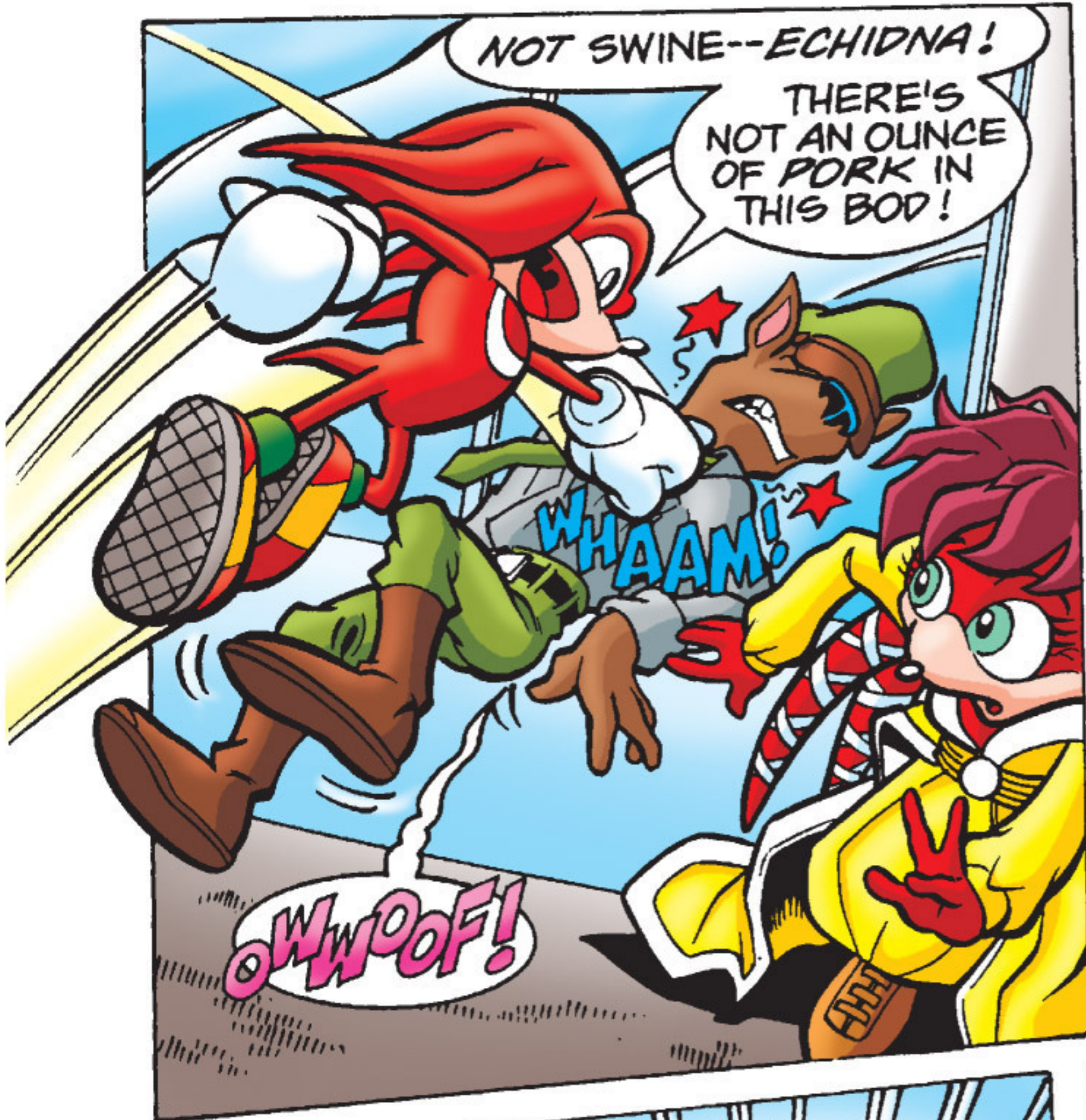


**ZERO HOUR...  
AND COUNTING**







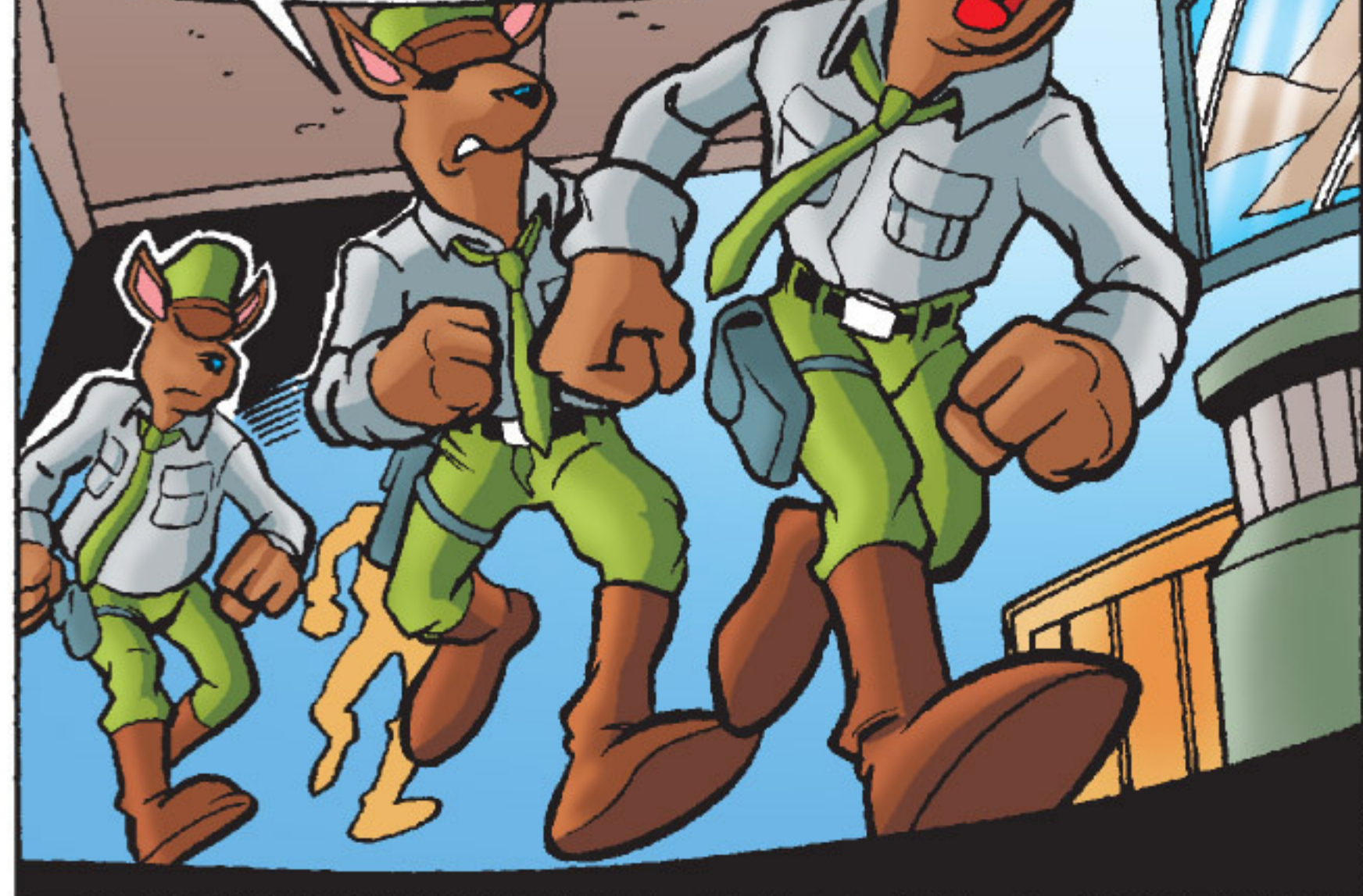




"--BUT WE'VE GOT COMPANY COMING, AND I DON'T THINK THEY PARTICULARLY LIKE US!"

DOWN THIS WAY, TROOPS!

SOUNDS LIKE THE SQUADRON COMMANDER HAS HIS HANDS FULL!



WE'RE TOO LATE!  
CHECK ALL THE ROOMS! WHOEVER DID THIS HAS TO BE HERE!



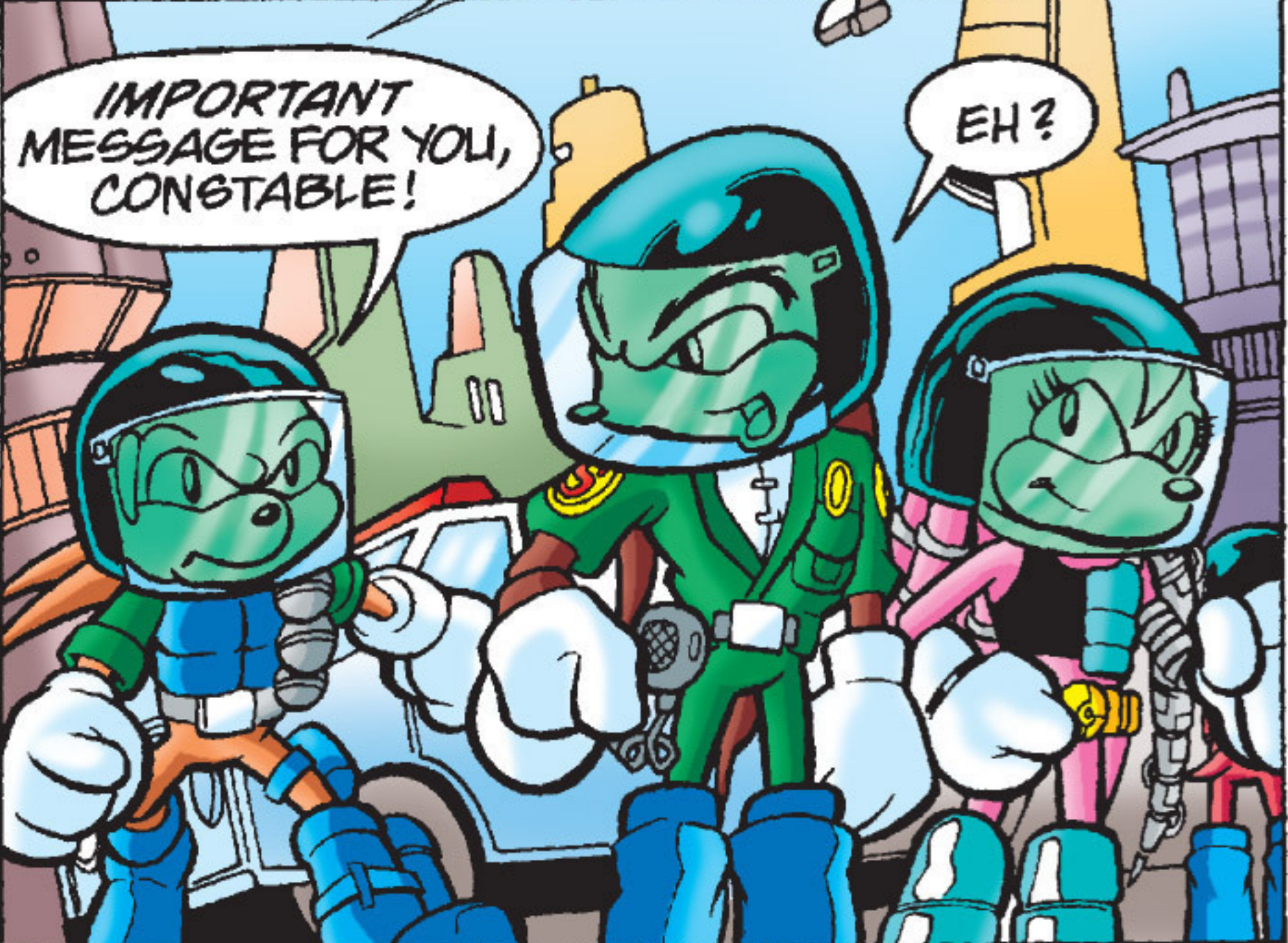
WAIT!

NOT TO WORRY, VERMIN--

WE'RE FADING OUT!



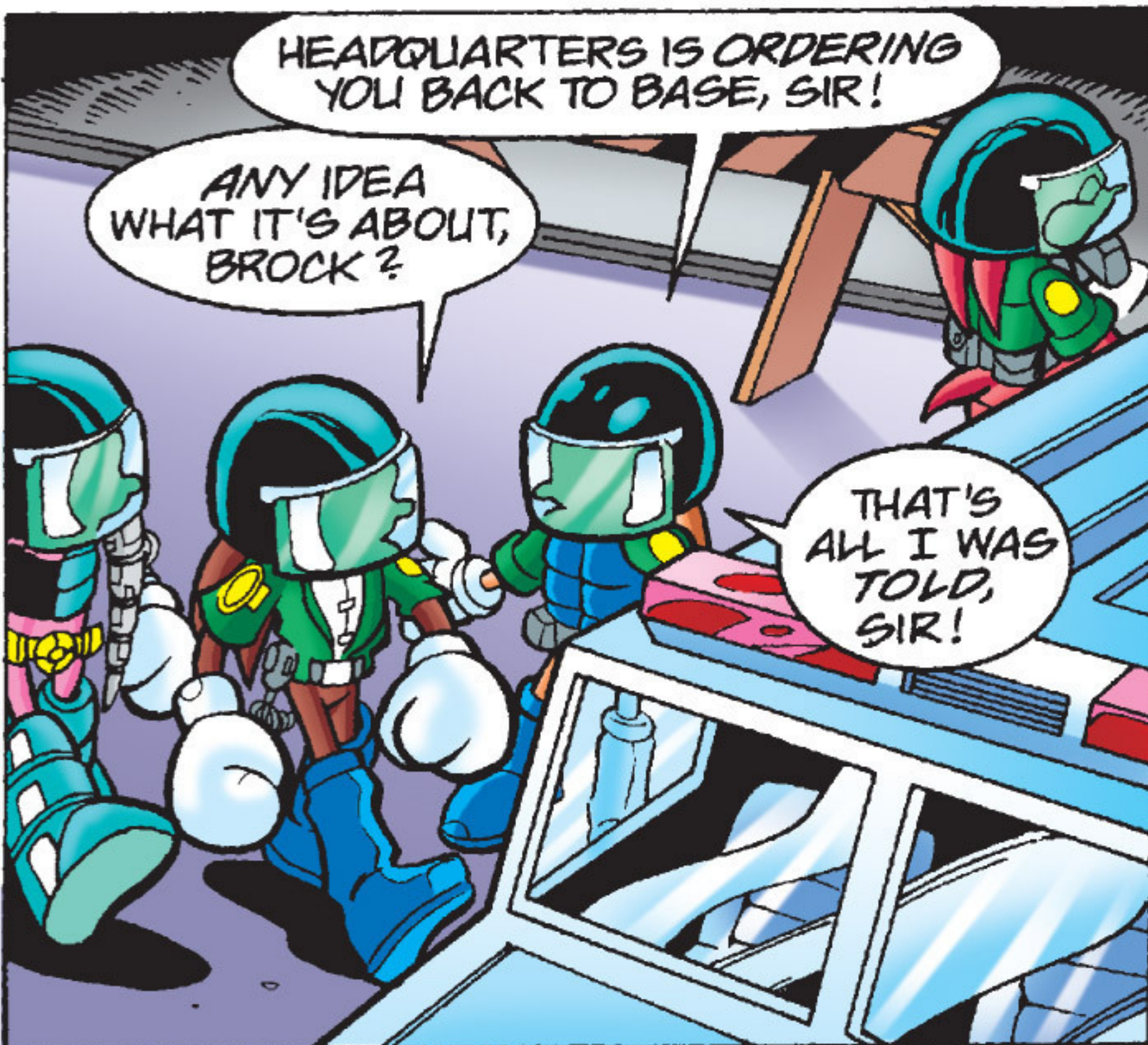
"--WE HAVEN'T FAILED THE GENERAL! I'M SURE HE'LL BE QUITE PLEASED WITH WHAT WE HAVE!"



HEADQUARTERS IS ORDERING YOU BACK TO BASE, SIR!

ANY IDEA WHAT IT'S ABOUT, BROCK?

THAT'S ALL I WAS TOLD, SIR!

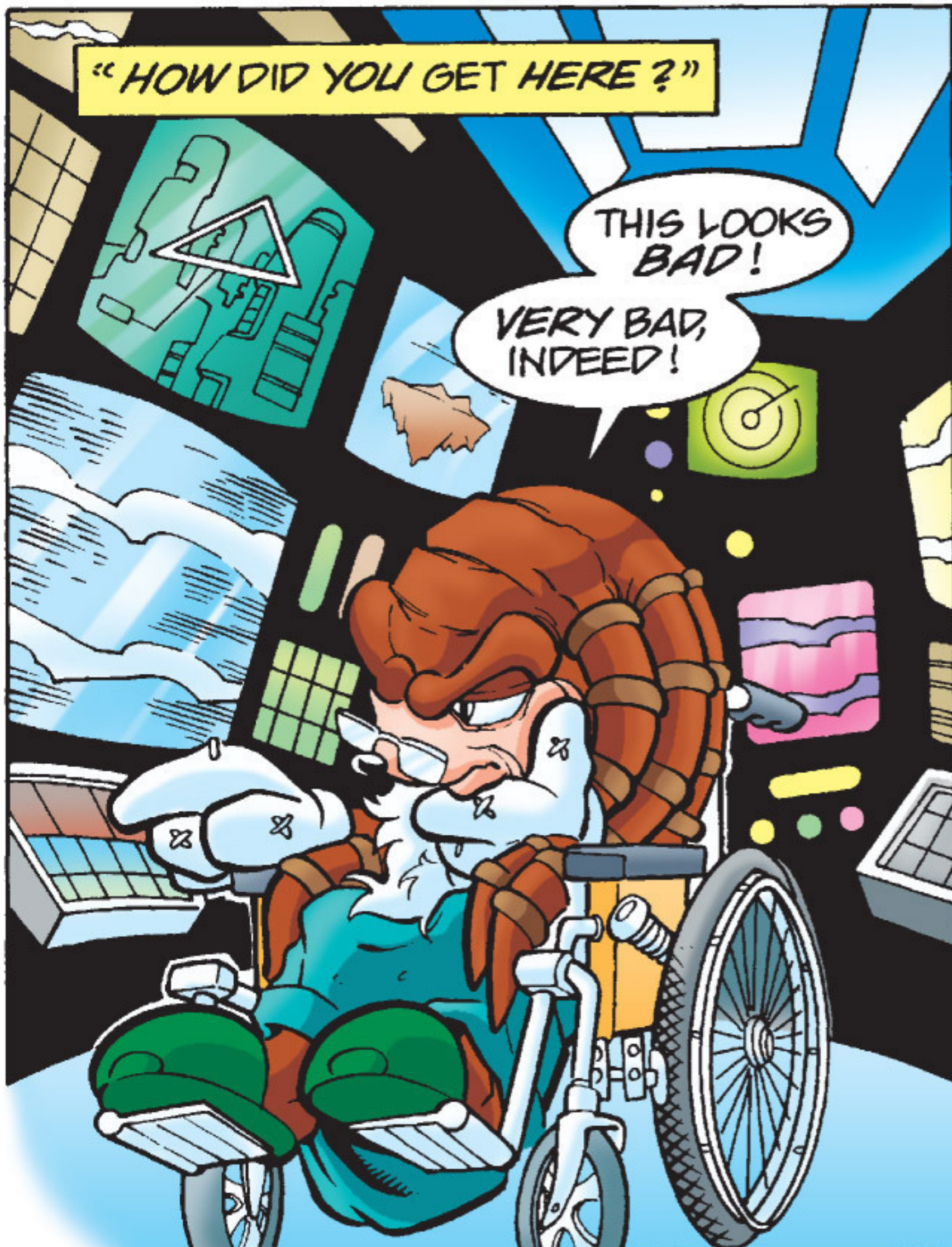


MAYBE IT'S KNUCKLES RETURNED FROM WHEREVER!

POSSIBLY! WE WON'T KNOW UNTIL--







"HOW DID YOU GET HERE?"

THIS LOOKS BAD!  
VERY BAD, INDEED!



WHAT LOOKS BAD, OLD FRIEND?

DEO! I'M GLAD YOU'VE COME!

AN INFORMED OPINION WOULD BE MOST WELCOME!

BAMF!

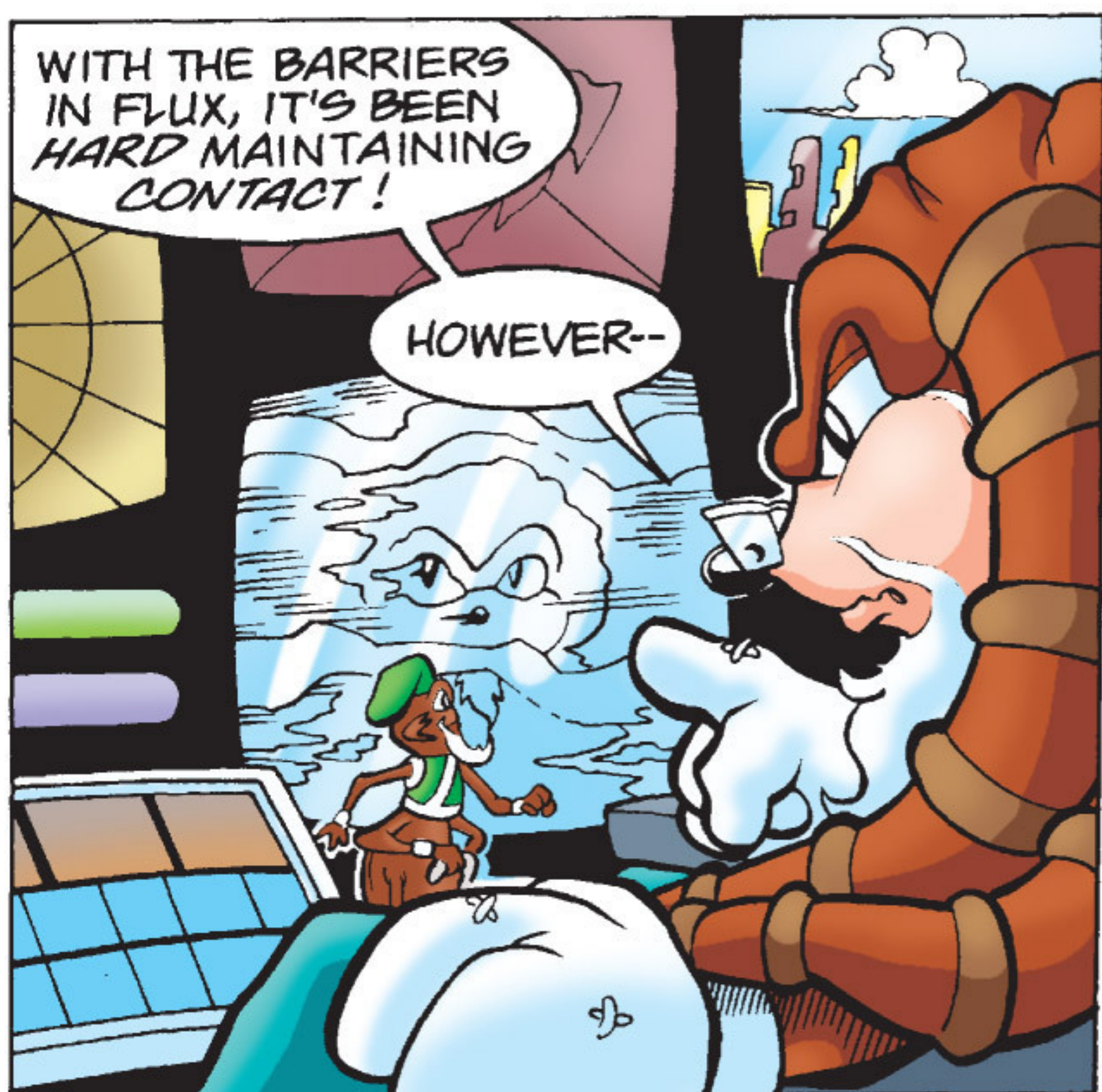


I'M AFRAID I'VE BLAMED THE WRONG PARTY FOR THESE DISTURBANCES!

THE DINGOES HAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ENERGY FLUCTUATIONS THAT ARE BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS BETWEEN THE HYPER ZONES!

THEN, WHO OR WHAT IS THE CAUSE, HAWKING?

I BELIEVE HAVEN HAS THE ANSWERS I SEEK!



WITH THE BARRIERS IN FLUX, IT'S BEEN HARD MAINTAINING CONTACT!

HOWEVER--

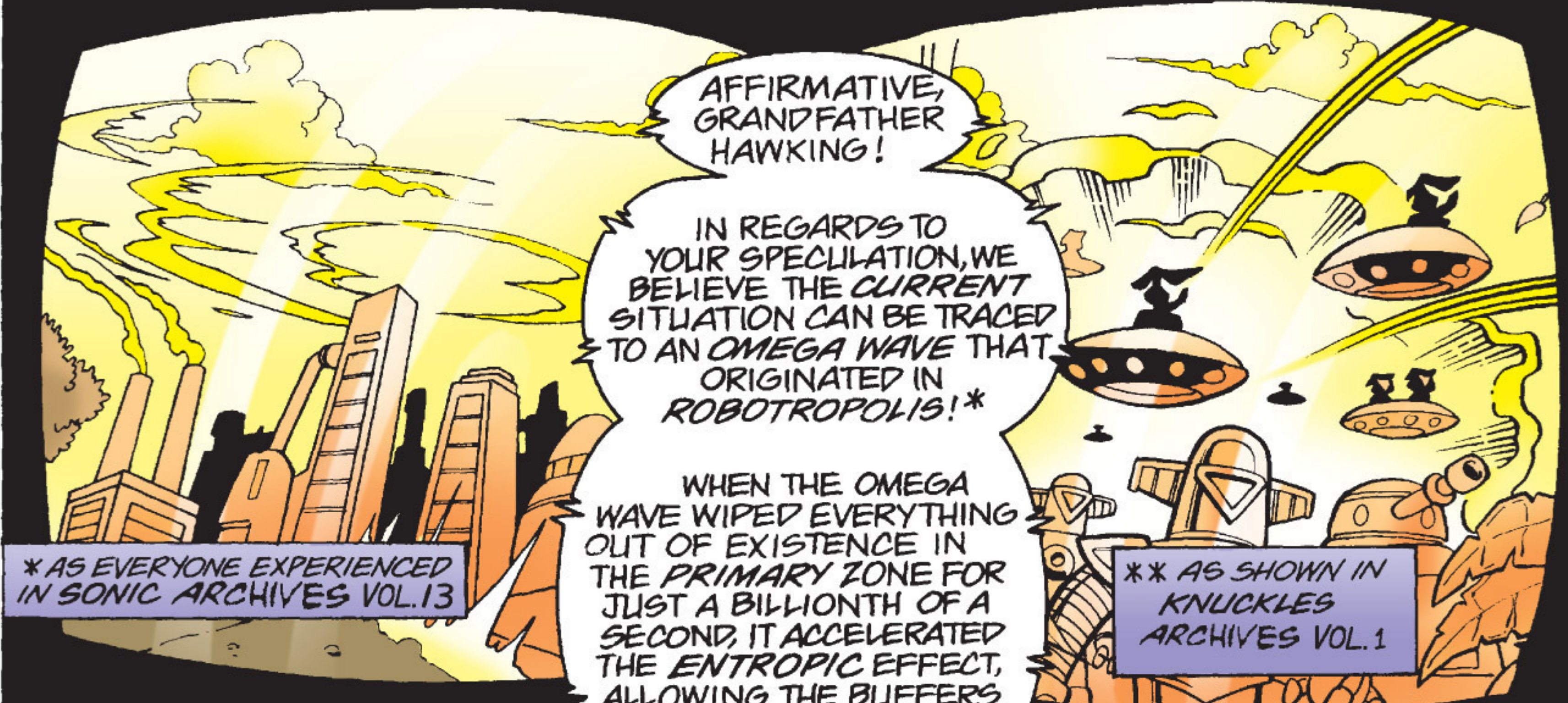


...ZZZ... READ ME? OVER!

AH, THERE YOU ARE, LOCKE!

DID YOU RECEIVE MY EARLIER TRANSMISSION?





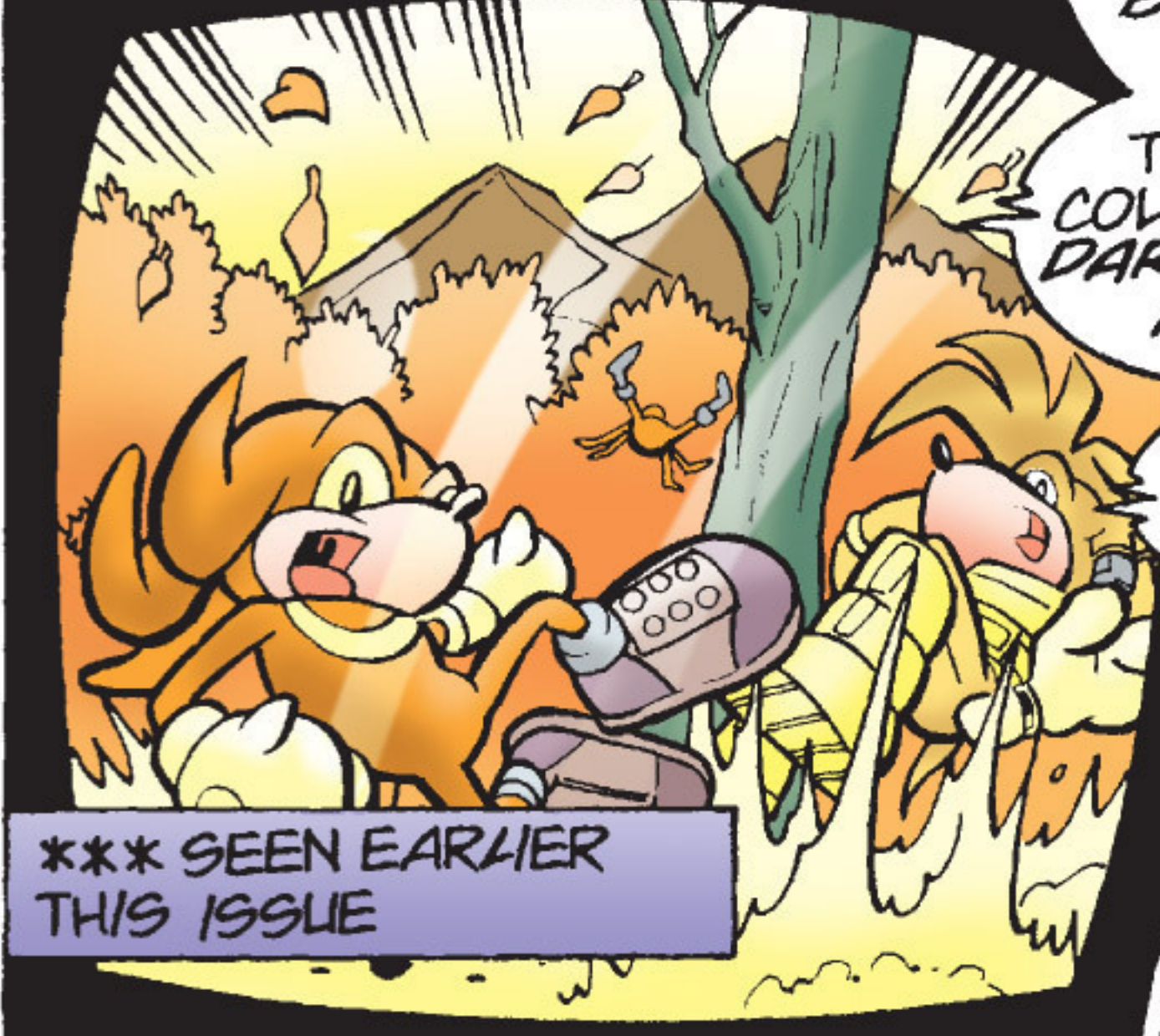
AFFIRMATIVE, GRANDFATHER HAWKING!

IN REGARDS TO YOUR SPECULATION, WE BELIEVE THE CURRENT SITUATION CAN BE TRACED TO AN OMEGA WAVE THAT ORIGINATED IN ROBOTROPOLIS!\*

WHEN THE OMEGA WAVE WIPEDED EVERYTHING OUT OF EXISTENCE IN THE PRIMARY ZONE FOR JUST A BILLIONTH OF A SECOND, IT ACCELERATED THE ENTROPIC EFFECT, ALLOWING THE BUFFERS BETWEEN ZONES TO BREAK DOWN!

\* AS EVERYONE EXPERIENCED IN SONIC ARCHIVES VOL.13

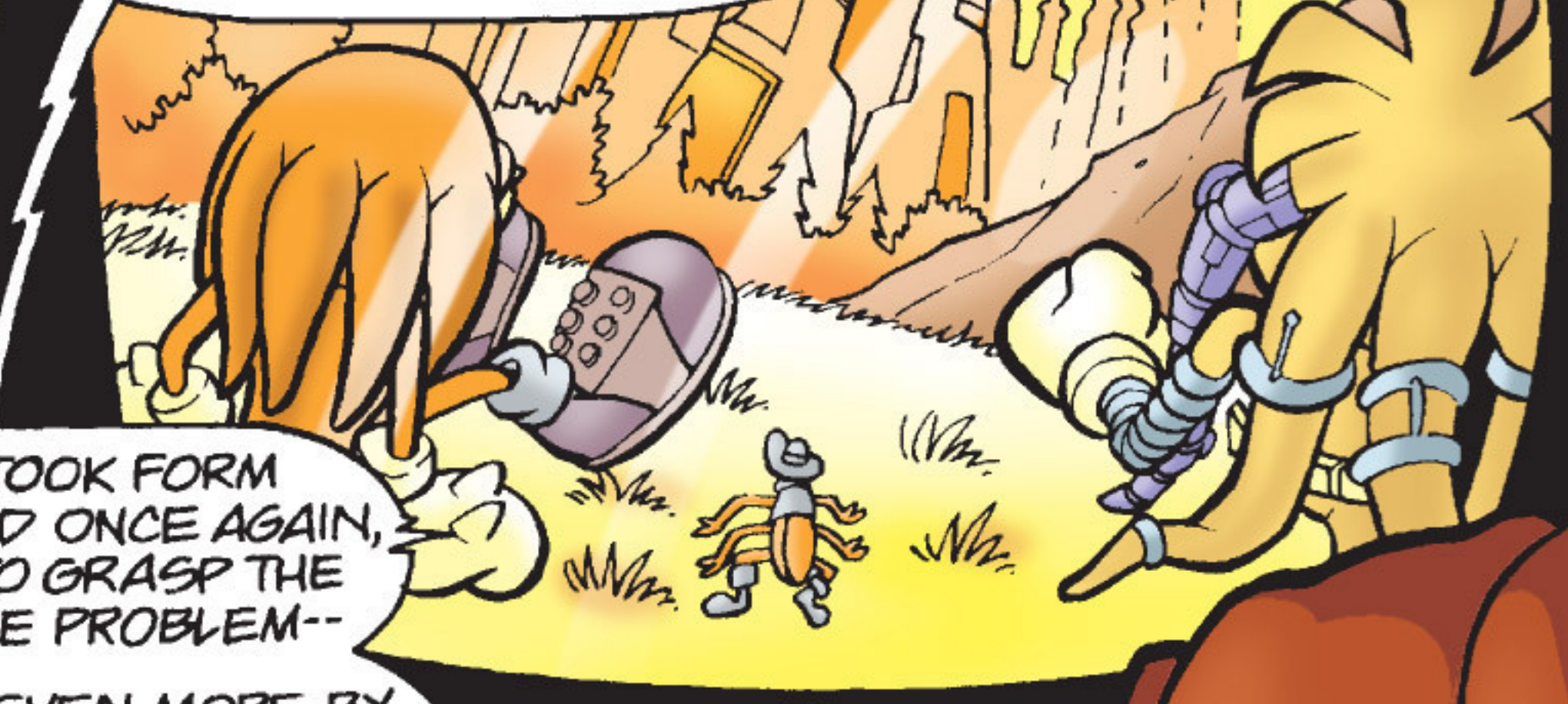
\*\* AS SHOWN IN KNUCKLES ARCHIVES VOL.1



\*\*\* SEEN EARLIER THIS ISSUE

THE FIRST SIGN OF ZONE COLLAPSE OCCURRED WHEN THE DARK LEGION INVADED THE FLOATING ISLAND!\*\*\*

FURTHER EVIDENCE EMERGED WHEN SEISMIC SHOCKWAVES ERUPTED IN THE MARBLE ZONE---\*\*\*



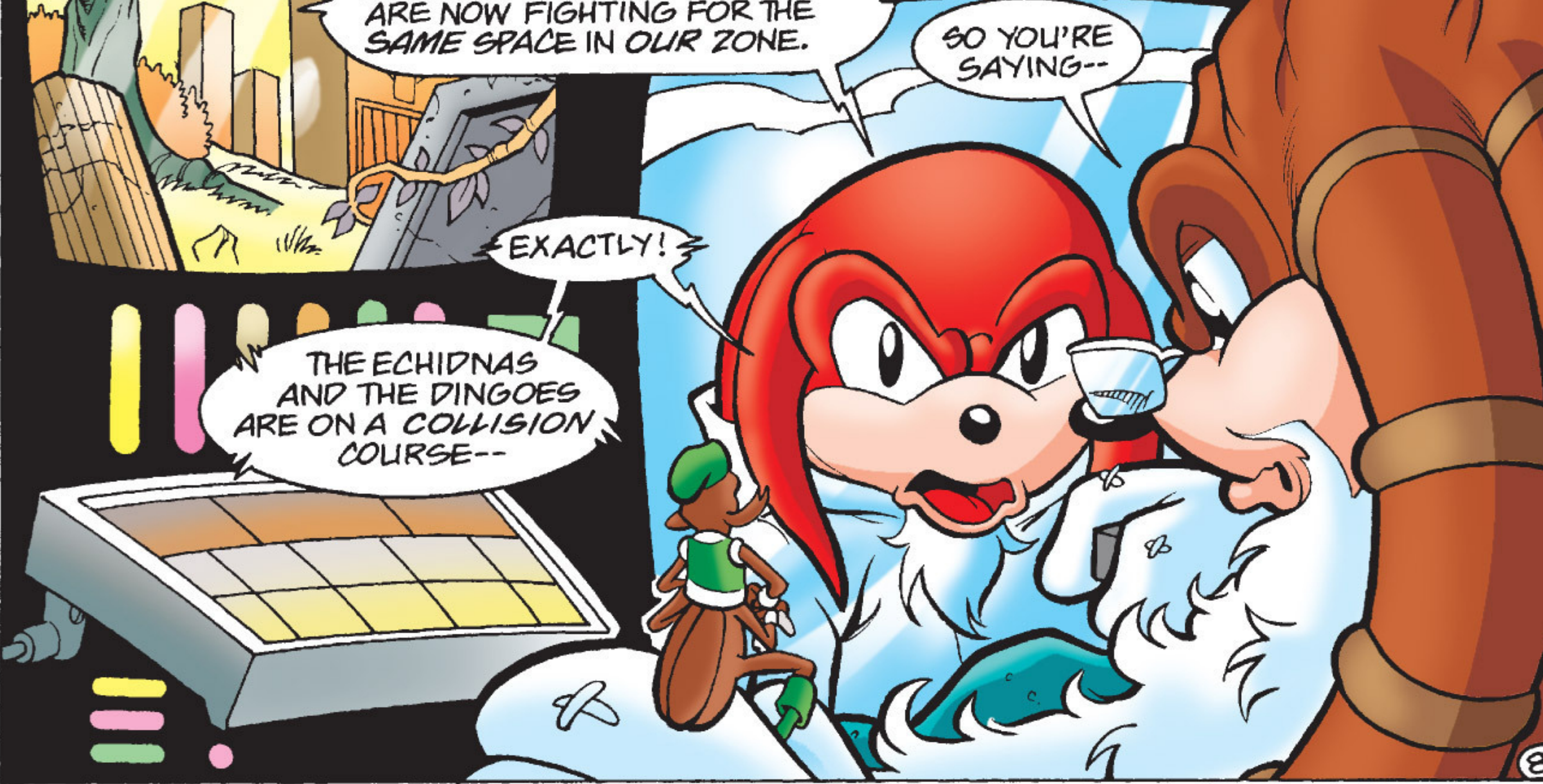
AS ECHIDNAOPOLIS TOOK FORM AND SHAPE ON THE ISLAND ONCE AGAIN, IT WAS THEN WE BEGAN TO GRASP THE TRUE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM--

-- COMPOUNDED EVEN MORE BY THE FACT THAT OTHER ZONES ARE NOW FIGHTING FOR THE SAME SPACE IN OUR ZONE.

SO YOU'RE SAYING--

EXACTLY!

THE ECHIDNAS AND THE DINGOES ARE ON A COLLISION COURSE--





"... AND ONLY ONE CAN SURVIVE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHER!"

THAT WAS PRUDENT ON YOUR PART TO GET LADY LARA-LE TO SAFETY, GUARDIAN!

YEAH, BUT WE WEREN'T ABLE TO SAVE THE OTHERS!



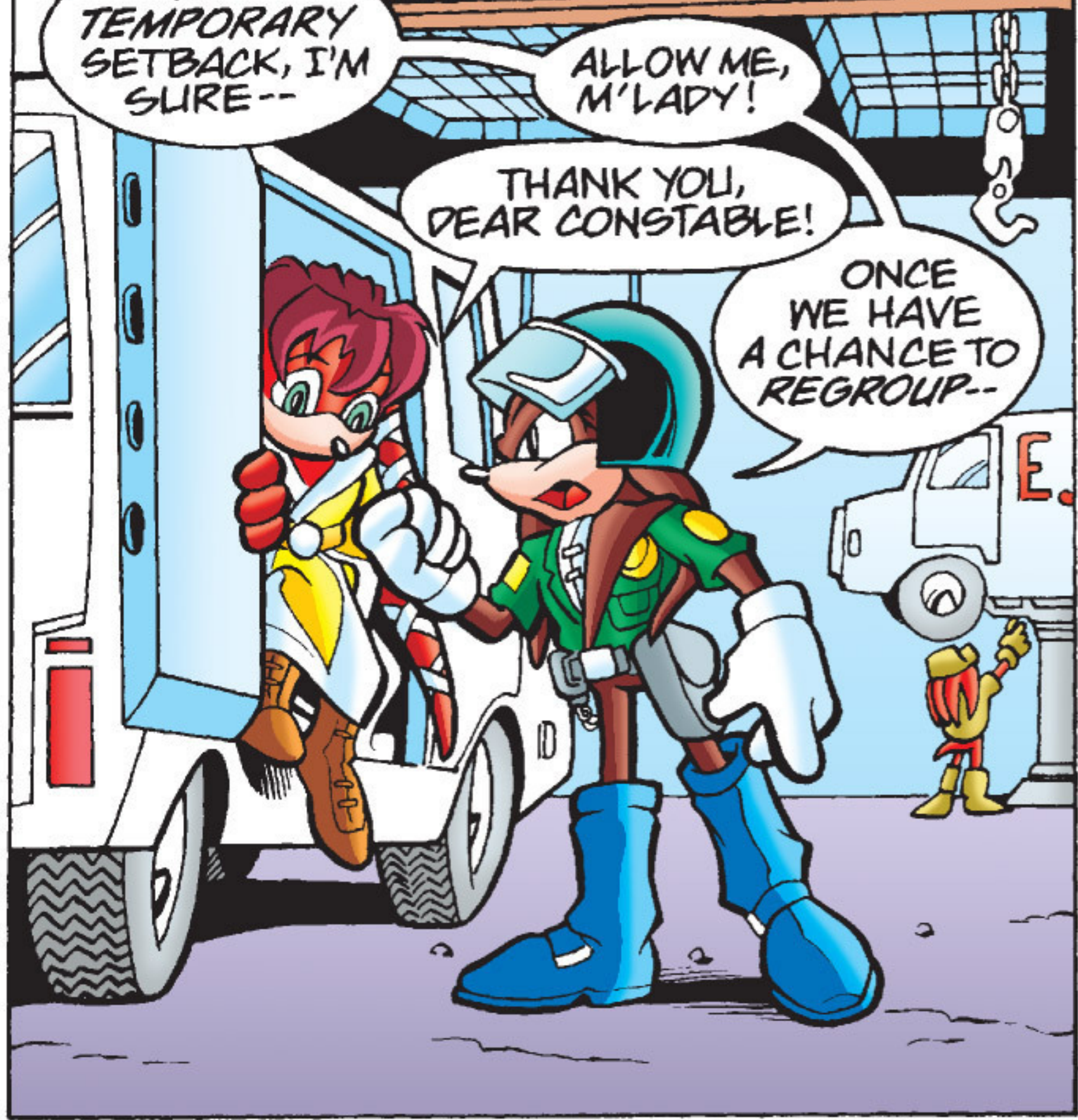
A TEMPORARY SETBACK, I'M SURE--

ALLOW ME, M'LADY!

THANK YOU, DEAR CONSTABLE!

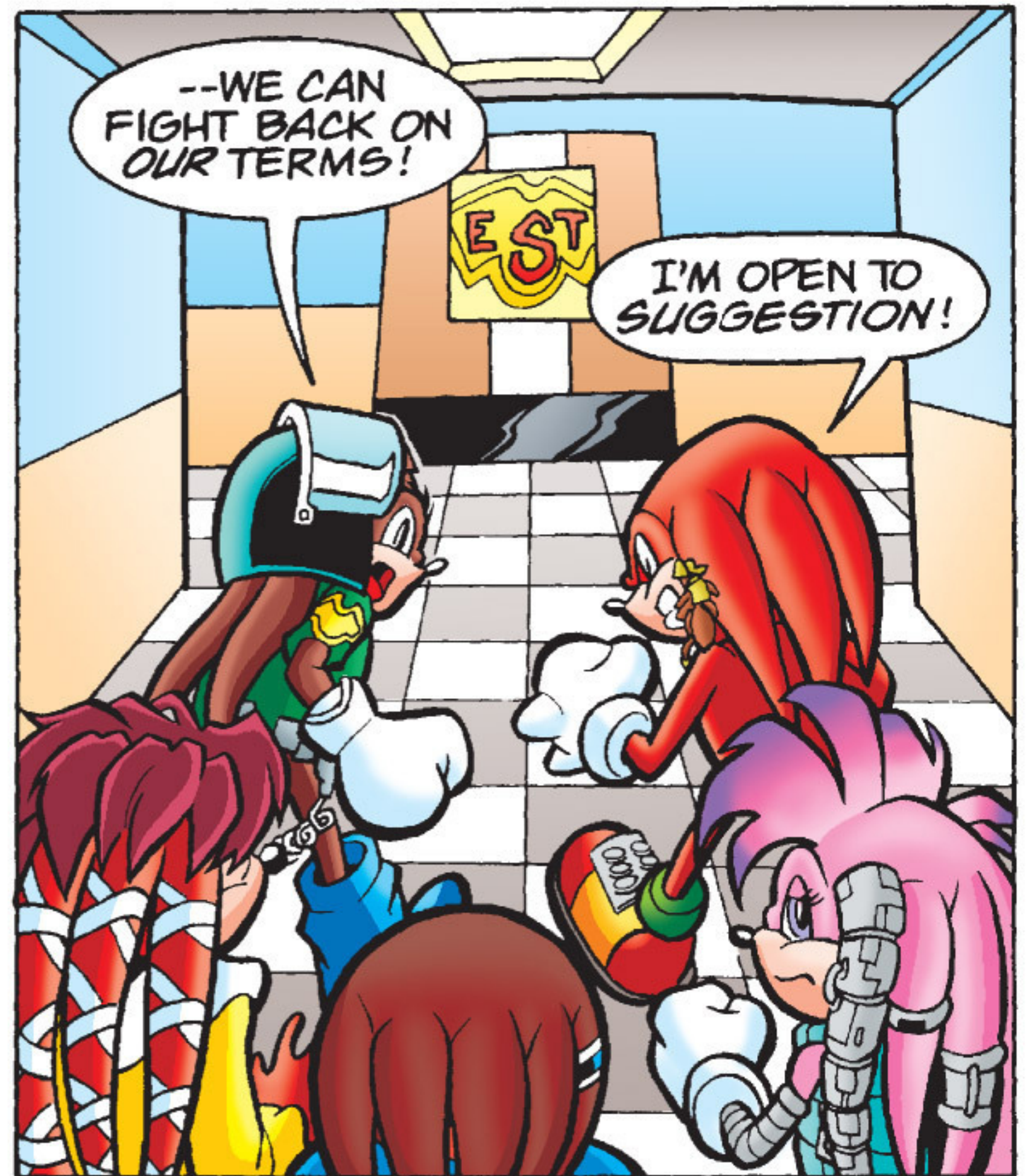
ONCE WE HAVE A CHANCE TO REGROUP--

SECURITY GARAGE AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY



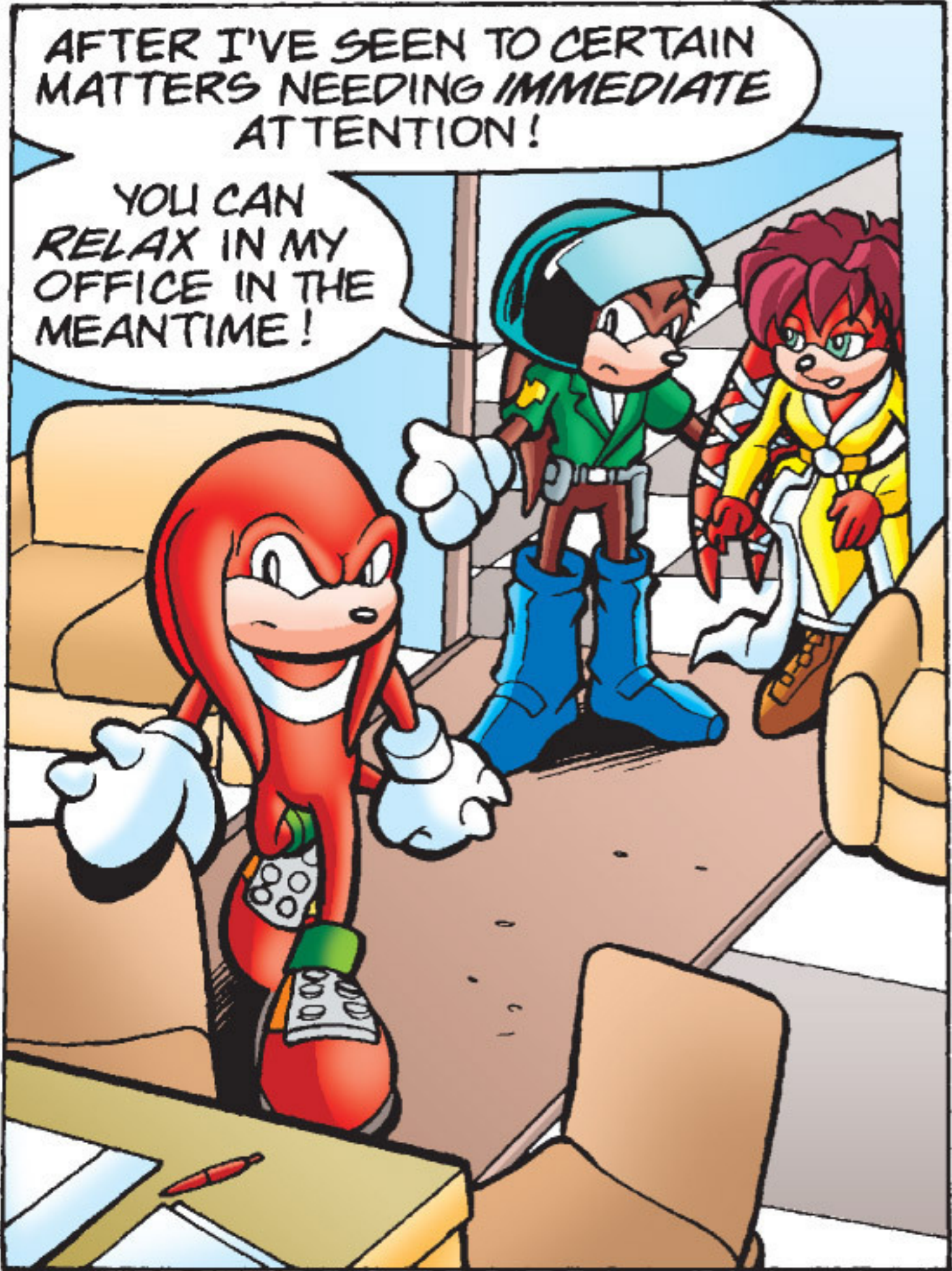
--WE CAN FIGHT BACK ON OUR TERMS!

I'M OPEN TO SUGGESTION!



AFTER I'VE SEEN TO CERTAIN MATTERS NEEDING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION!

YOU CAN RELAX IN MY OFFICE IN THE MEANTIME!

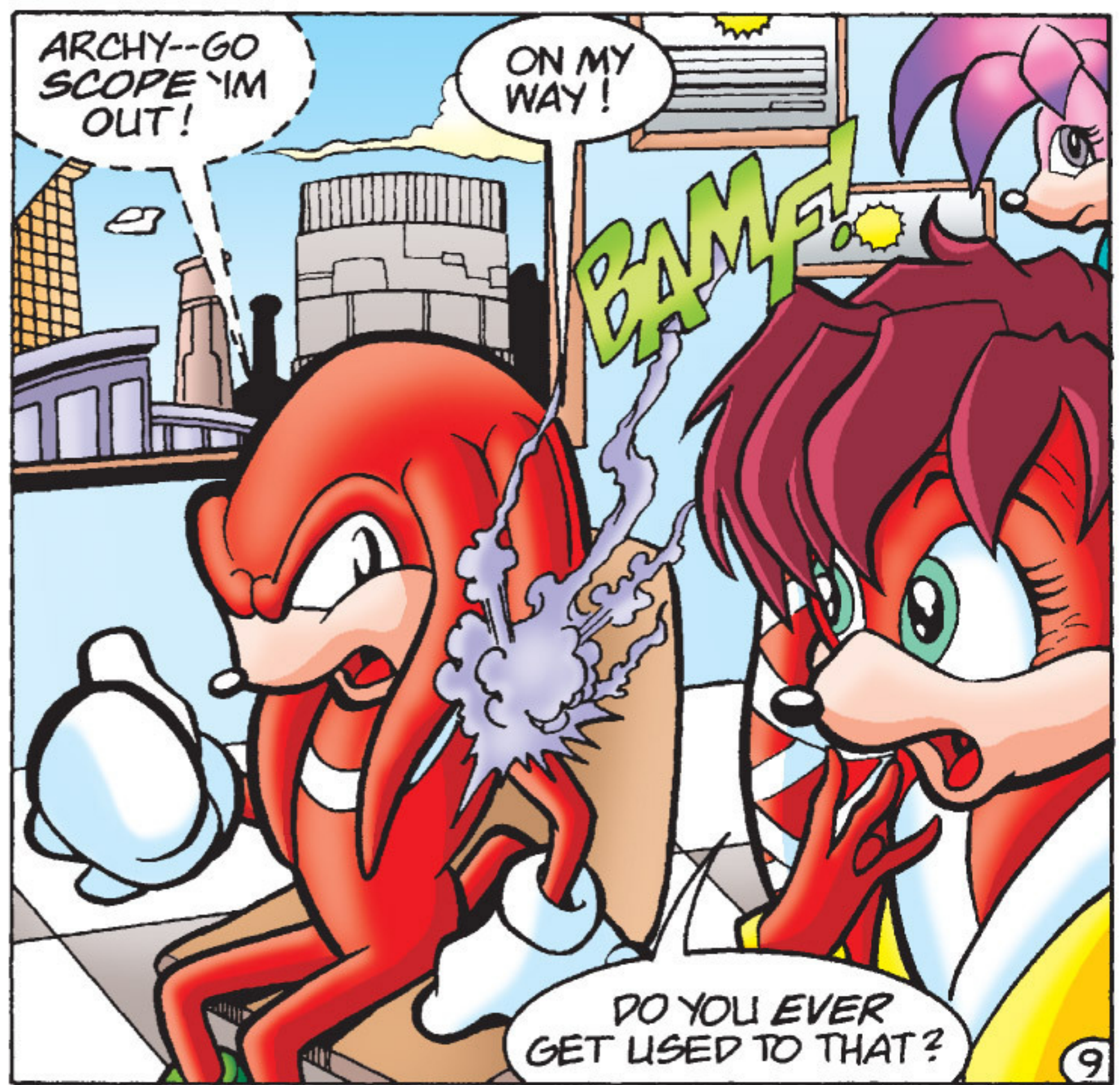


ARCHY--GO SCOPE 'IM OUT!

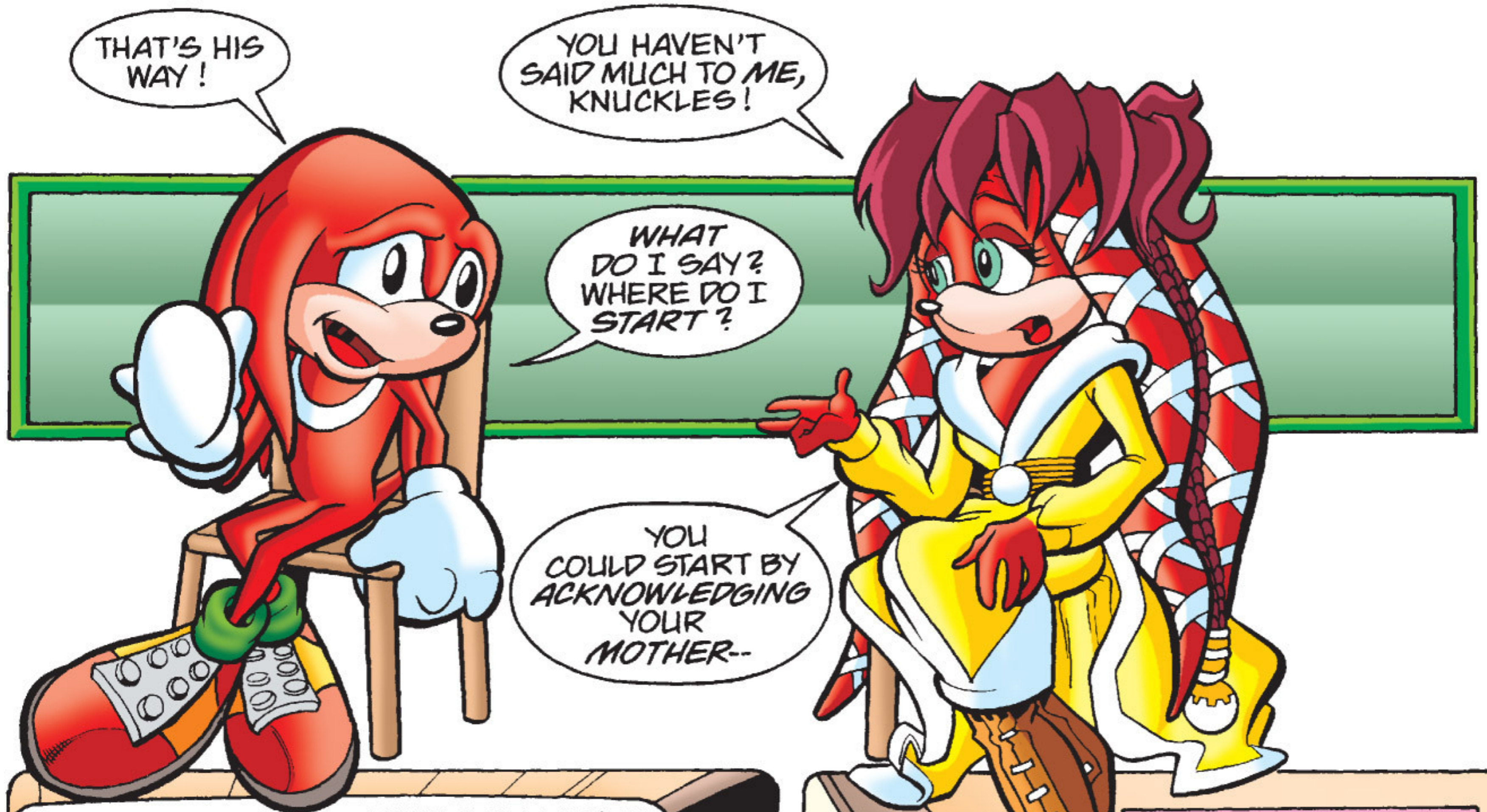
ON MY WAY!

BAMF!

DO YOU EVER GET USED TO THAT?





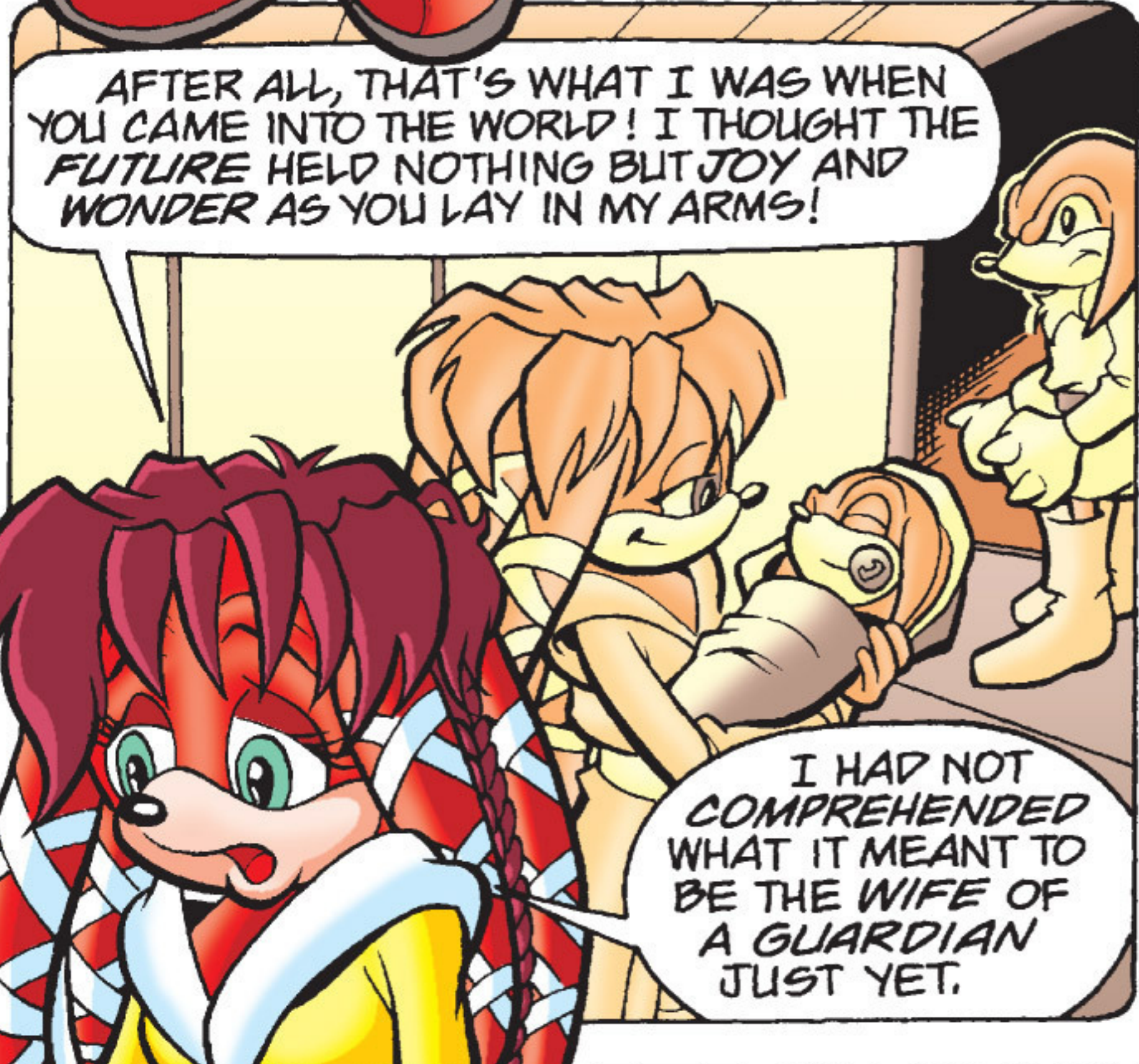


THAT'S HIS WAY!

YOU HAVEN'T SAID MUCH TO ME, KNUCKLES!

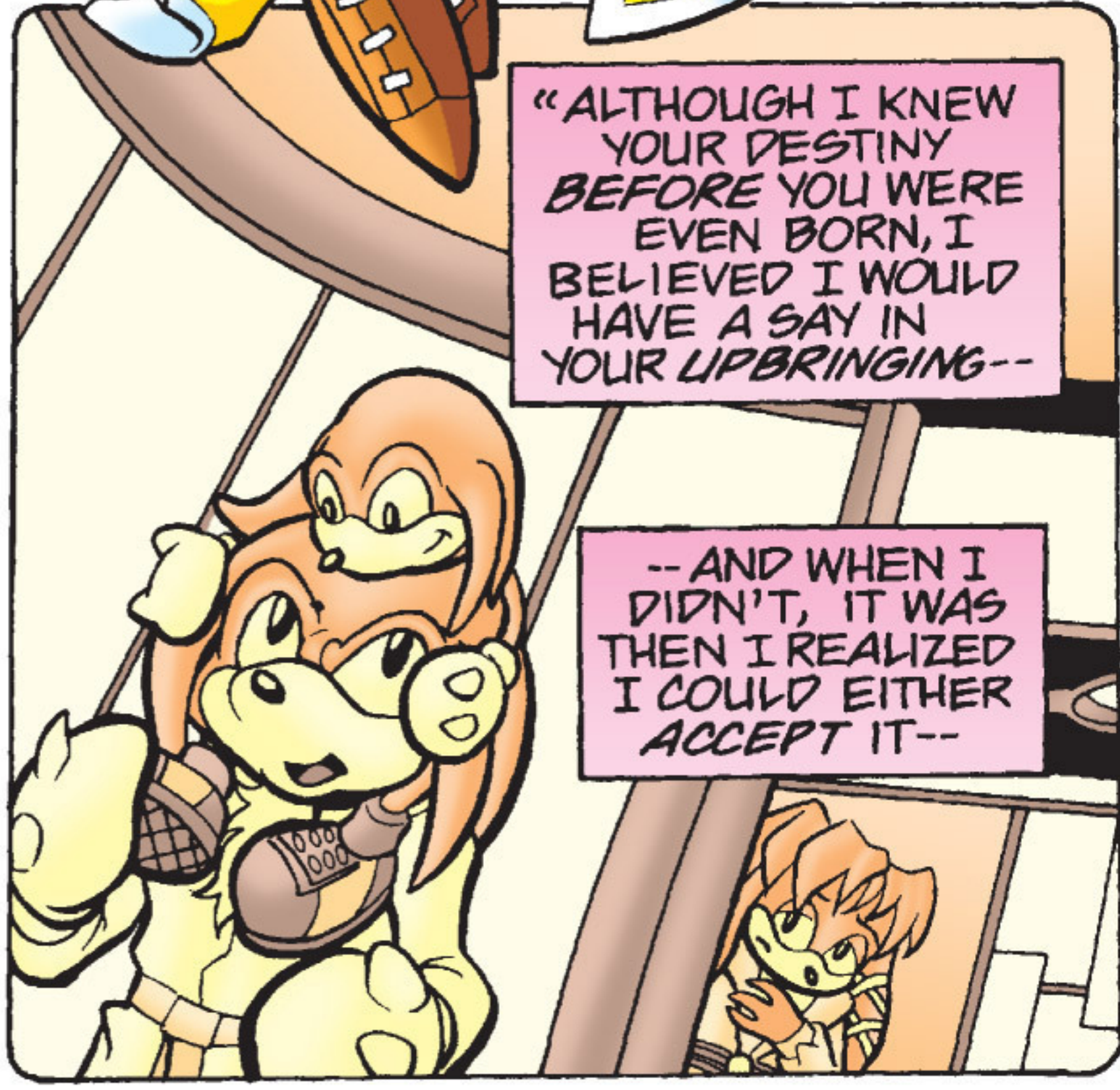
WHAT DO I SAY? WHERE DO I START?

YOU COULD START BY ACKNOWLEDGING YOUR MOTHER--



AFTER ALL, THAT'S WHAT I WAS WHEN YOU CAME INTO THE WORLD! I THOUGHT THE FUTURE HELD NOTHING BUT JOY AND WONDER AS YOU LAY IN MY ARMS!

I HAD NOT COMPREHENDED WHAT IT MEANT TO BE THE WIFE OF A GUARDIAN JUST YET.



"ALTHOUGH I KNEW YOUR DESTINY BEFORE YOU WERE EVEN BORN, I BELIEVED I WOULD HAVE A SAY IN YOUR UPBRINGING--

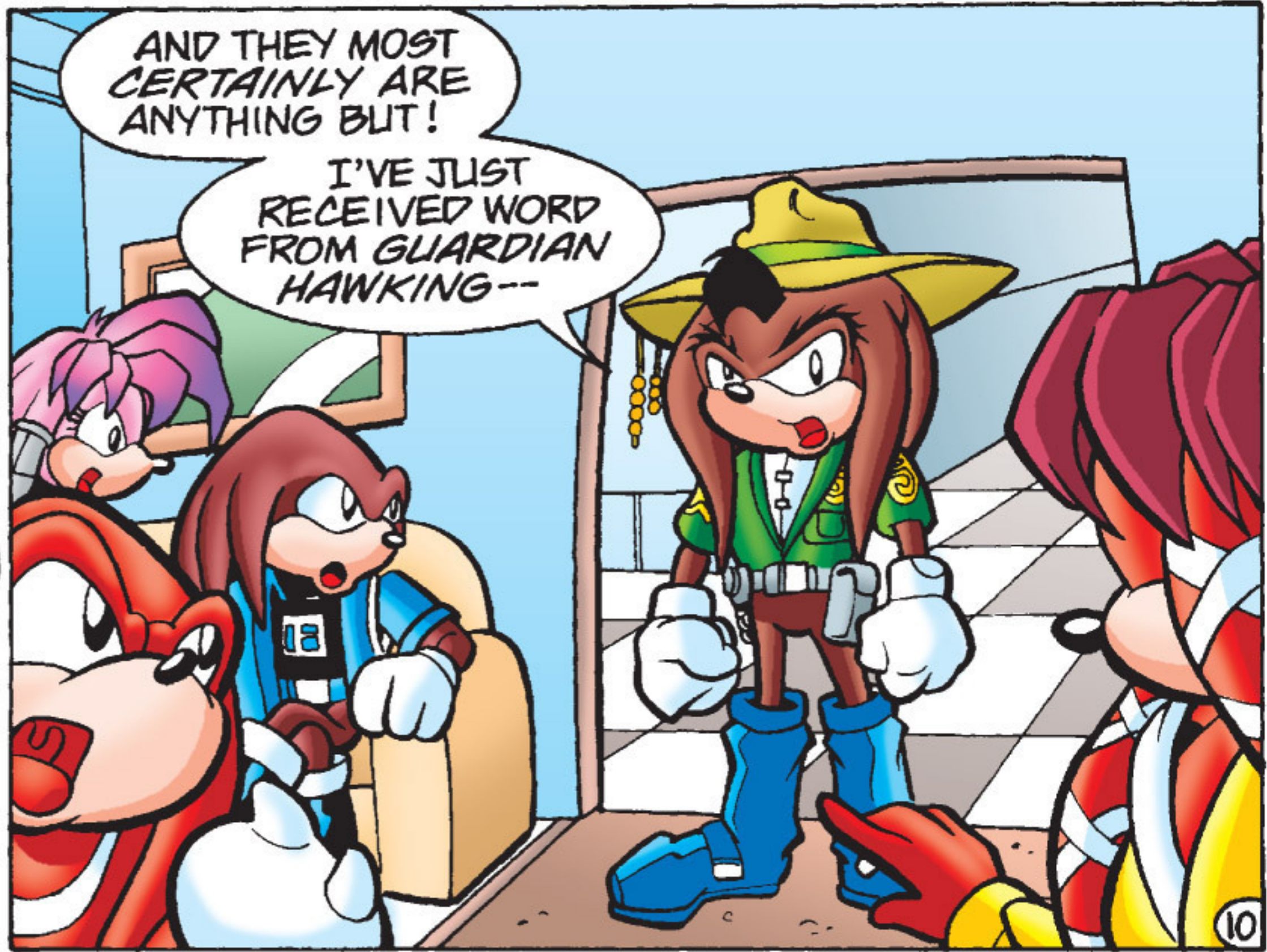
-- AND WHEN I DIDN'T, IT WAS THEN I REALIZED I COULD EITHER ACCEPT IT--



--OR WALK AWAY!

WEREN'T THERE ANY OTHER OPTIONS? I MEAN--

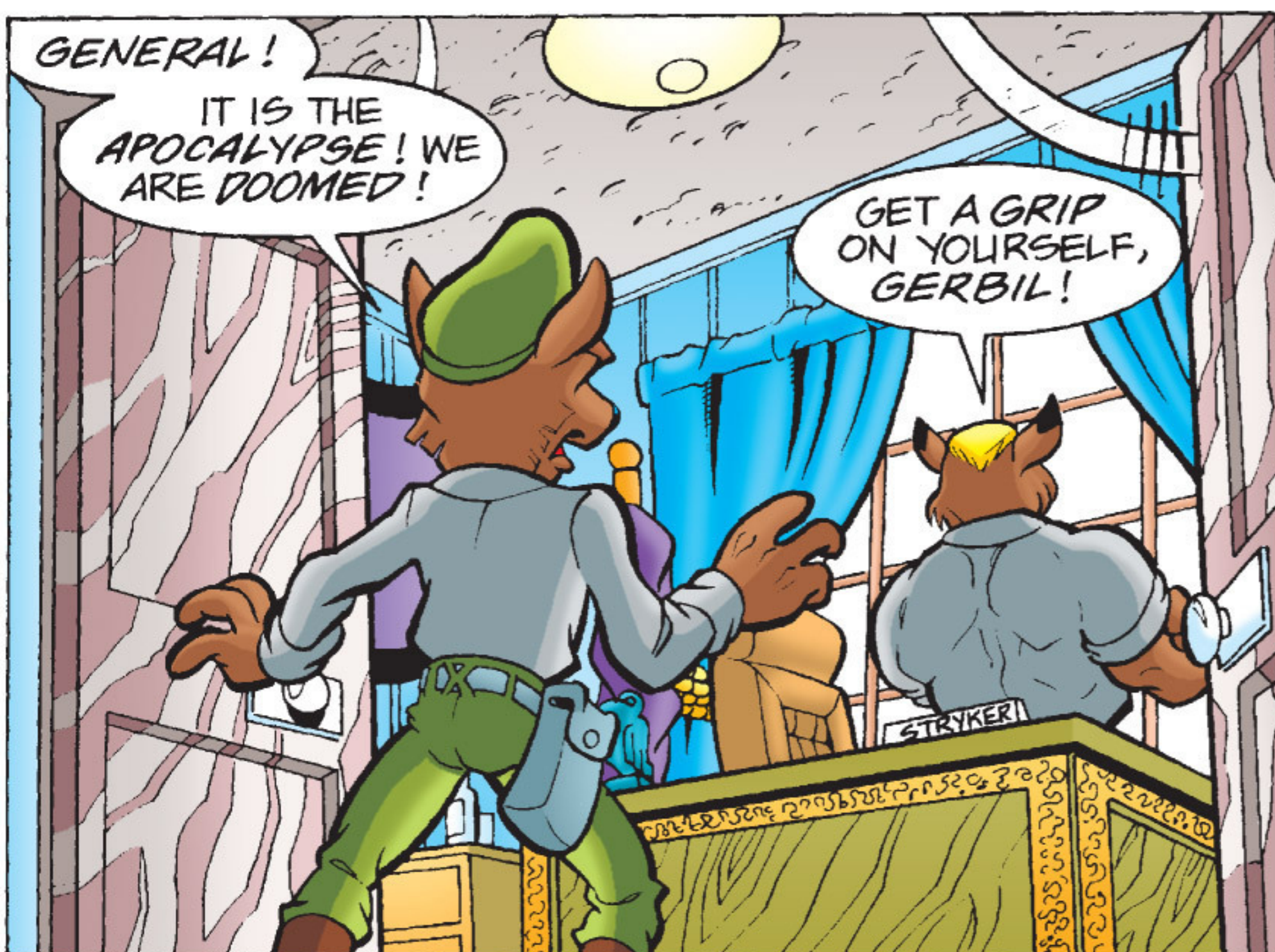
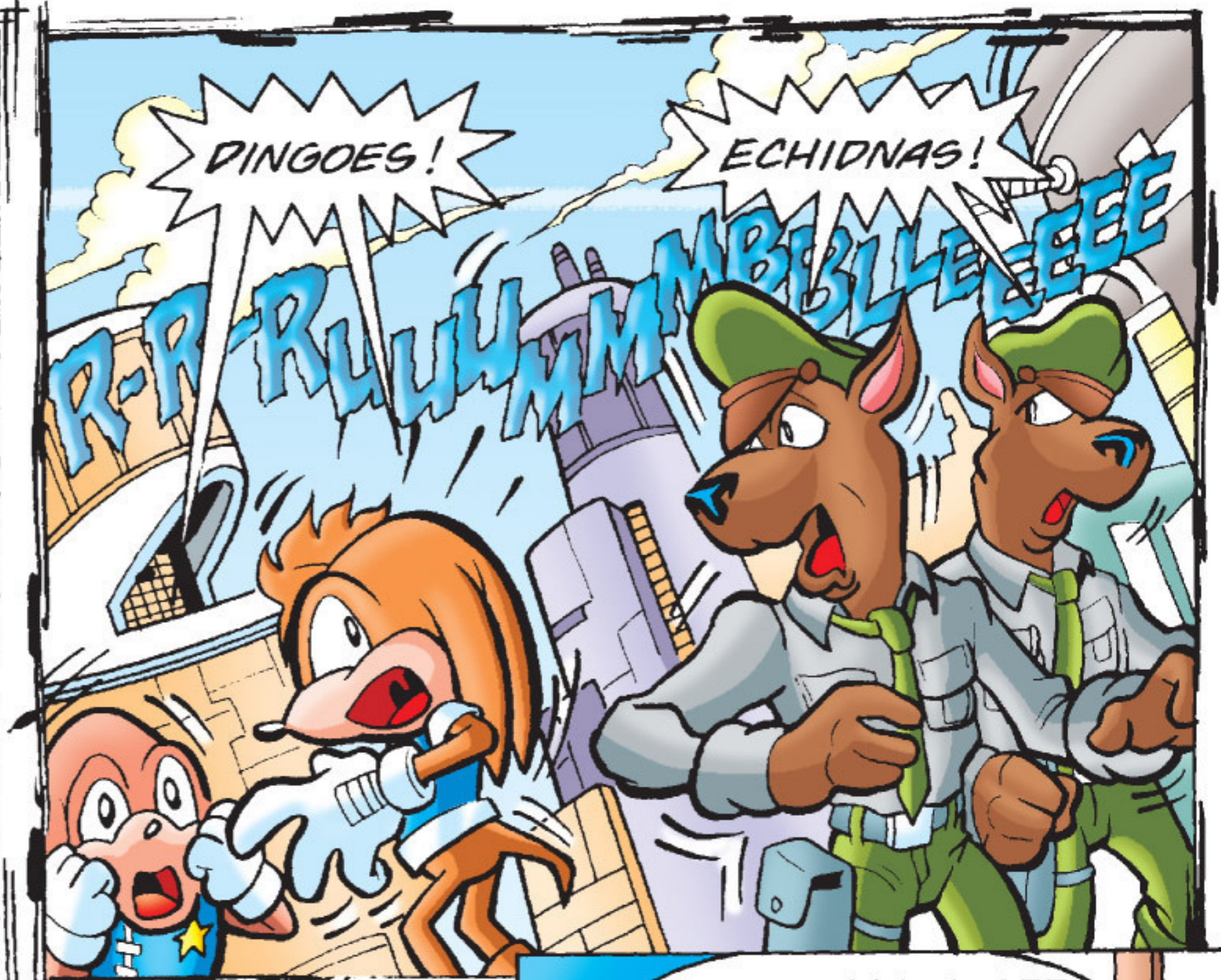
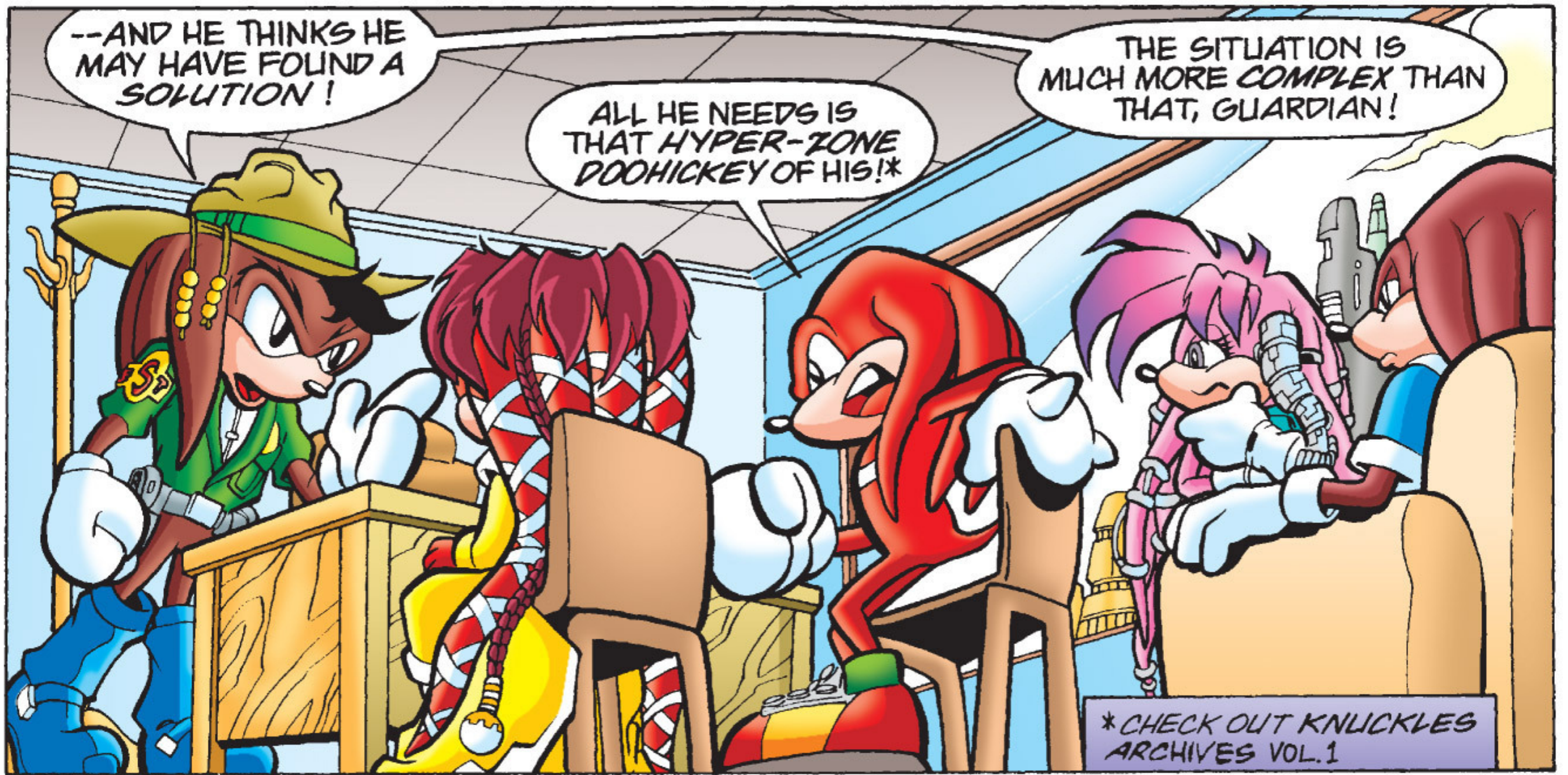
IF YOUR BLOODLINES WERE MORE TRADITIONAL, PERHAPS!



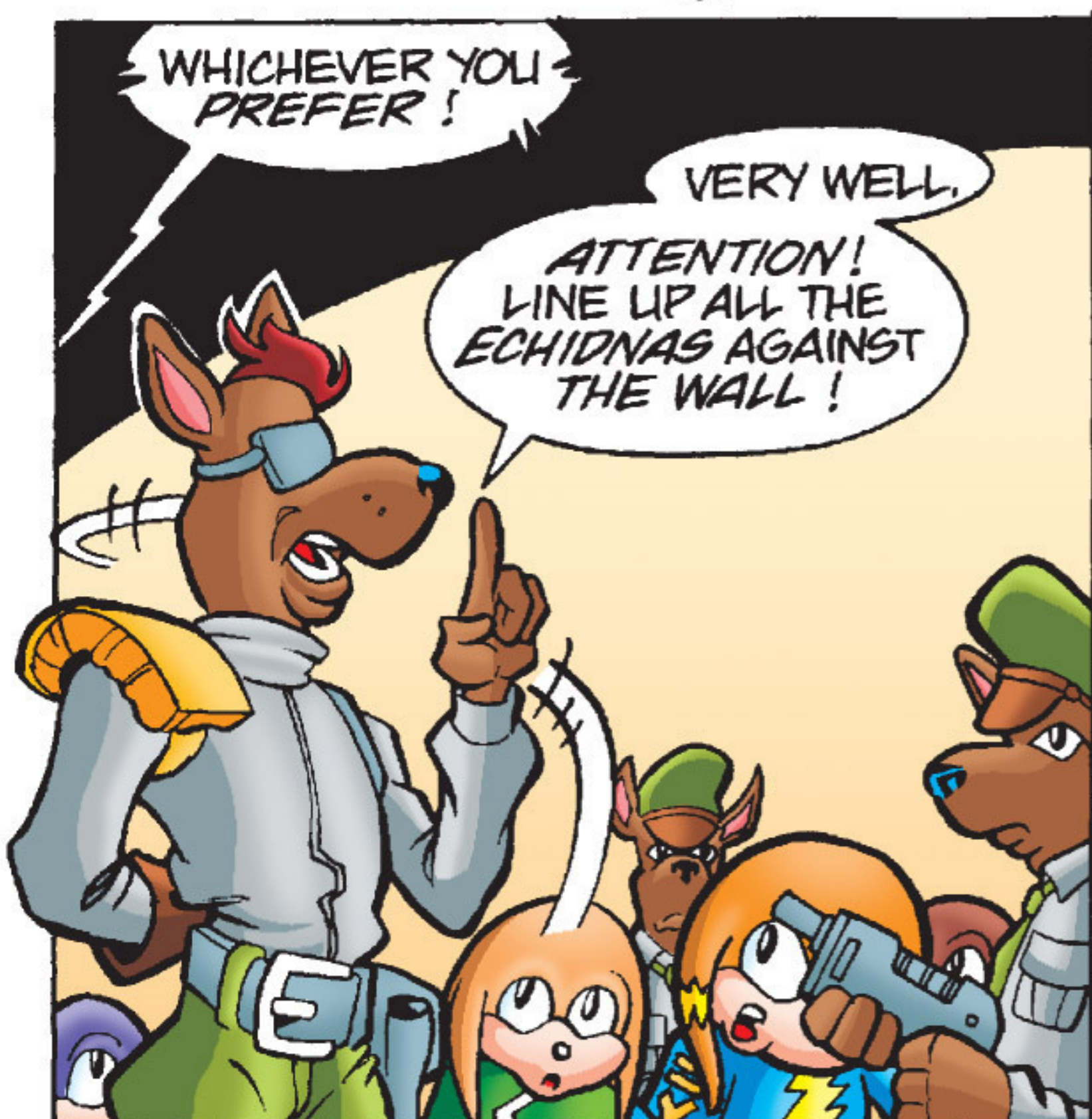
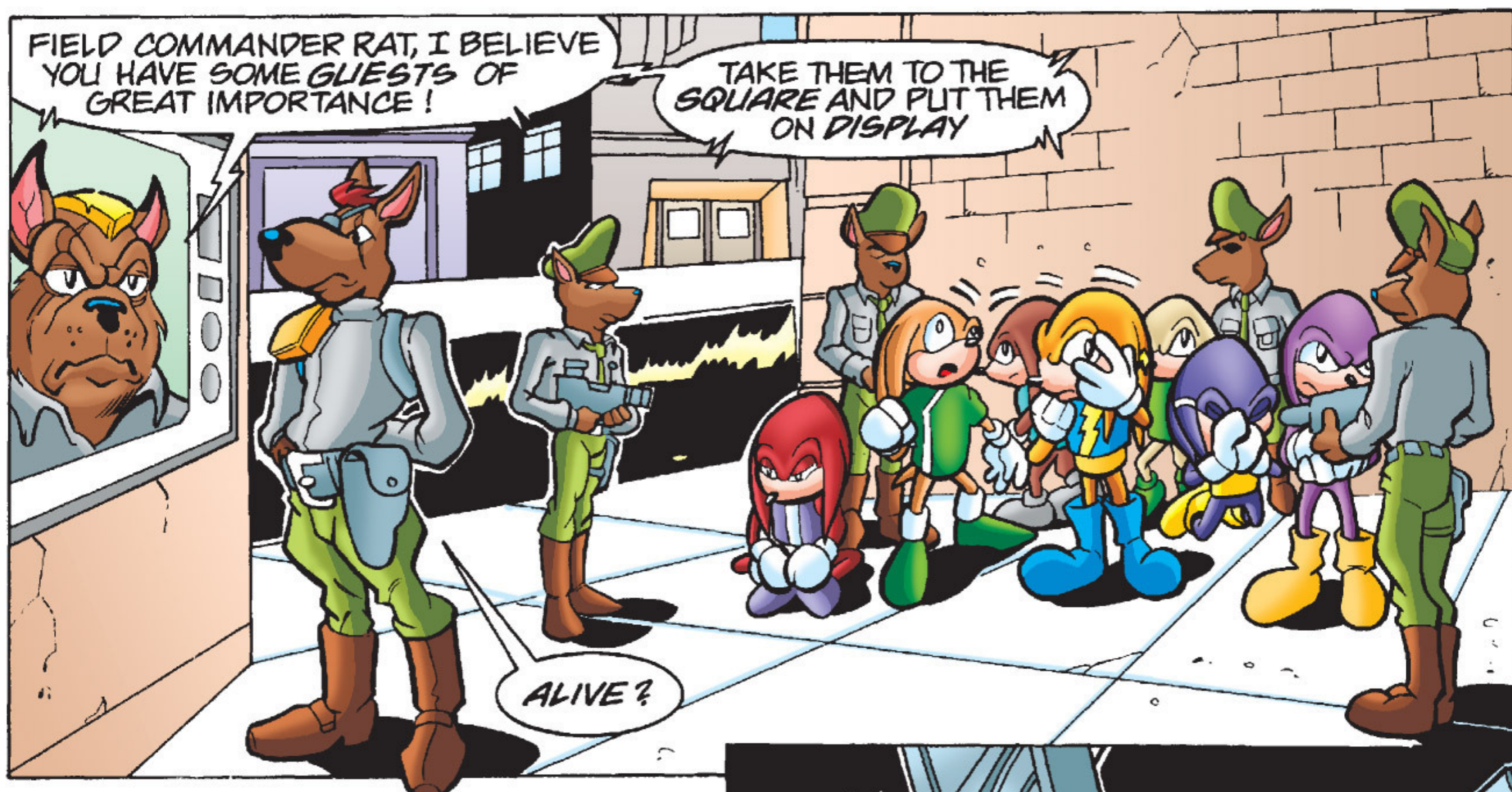
AND THEY MOST CERTAINLY ARE ANYTHING BUT!

I'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD FROM GUARDIAN HAWKING--

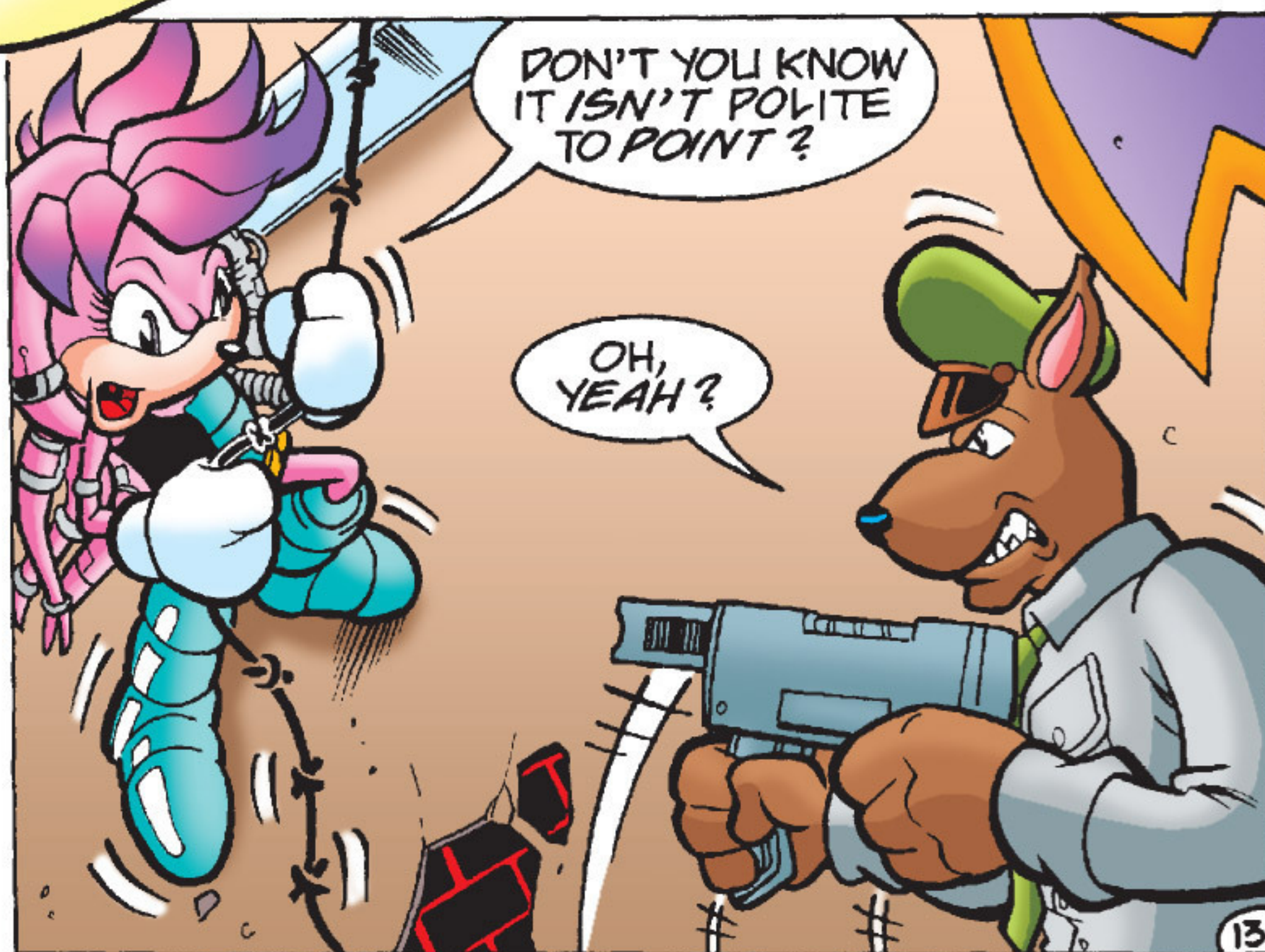
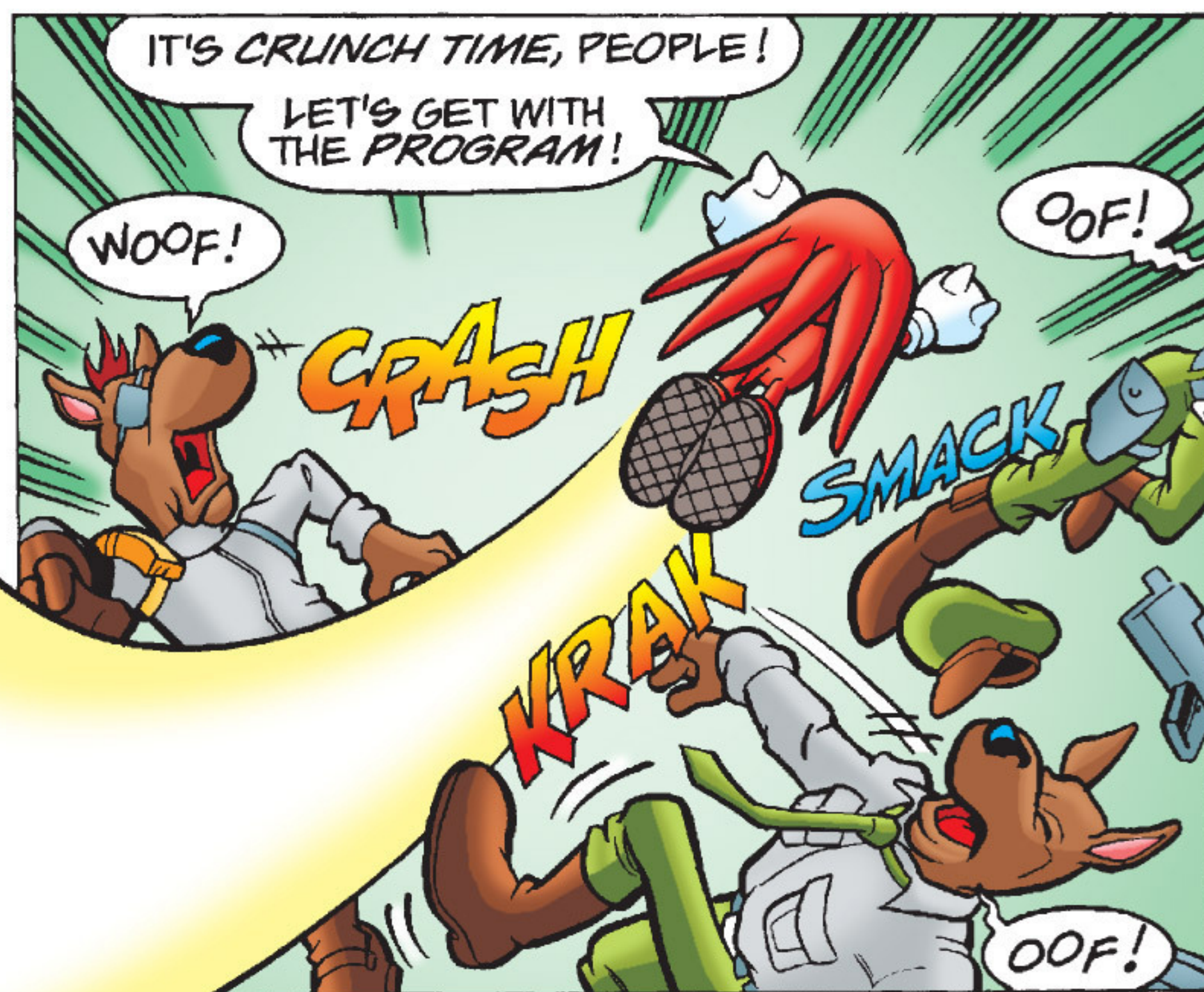
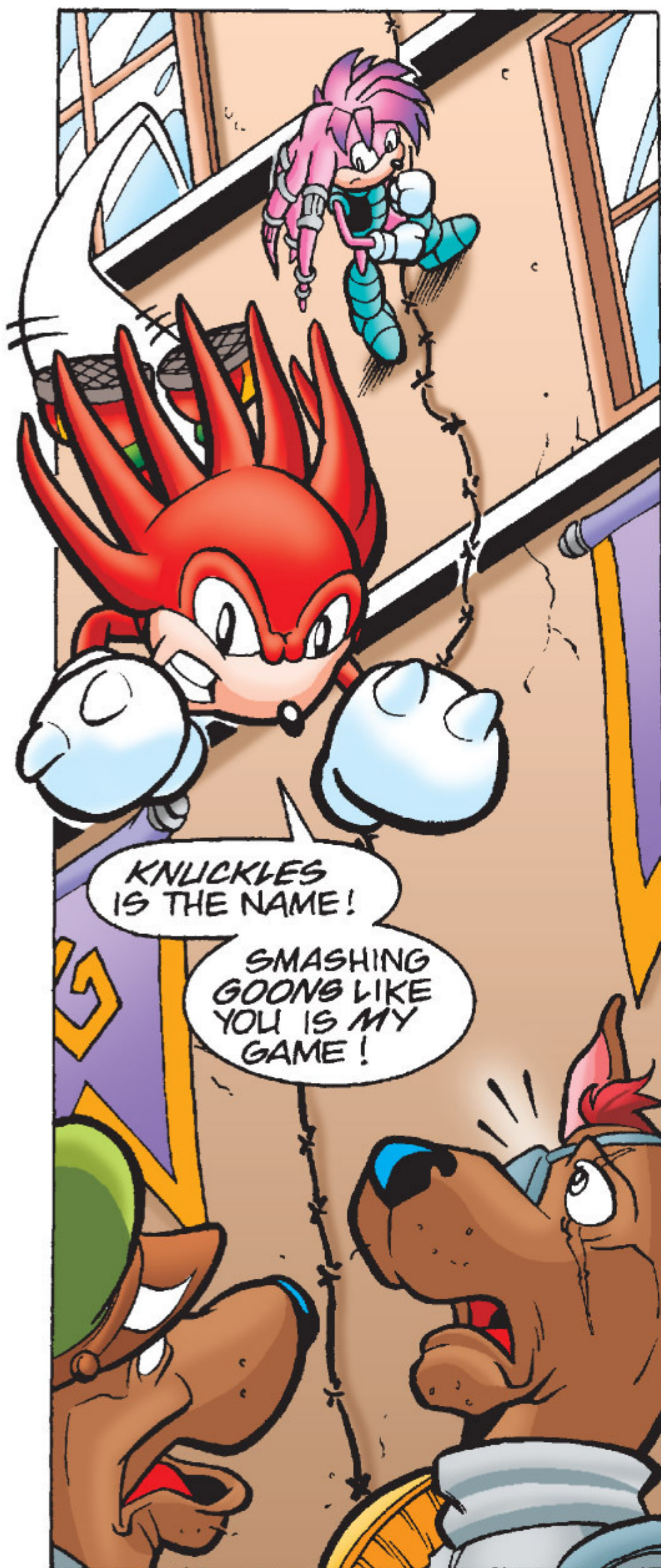
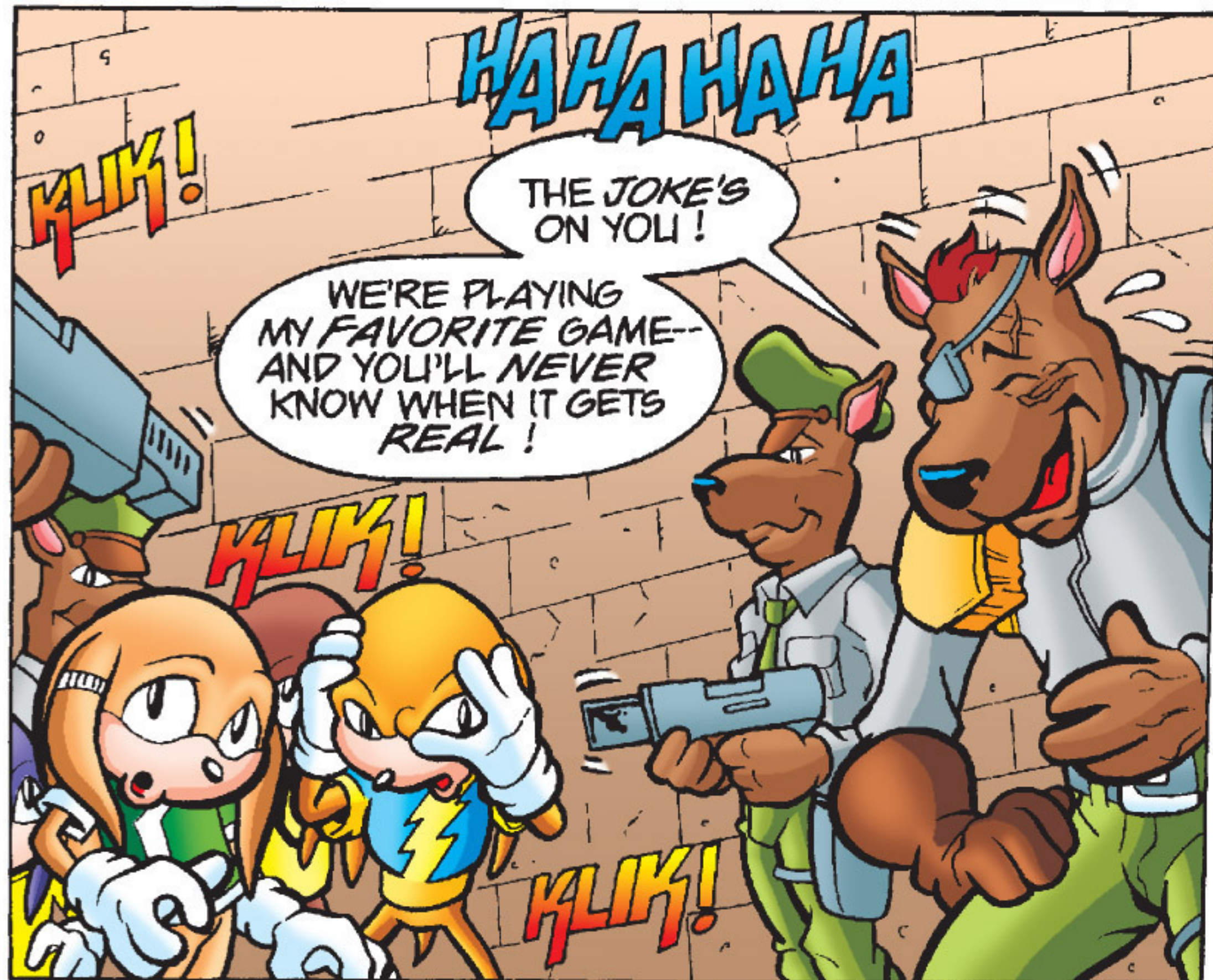




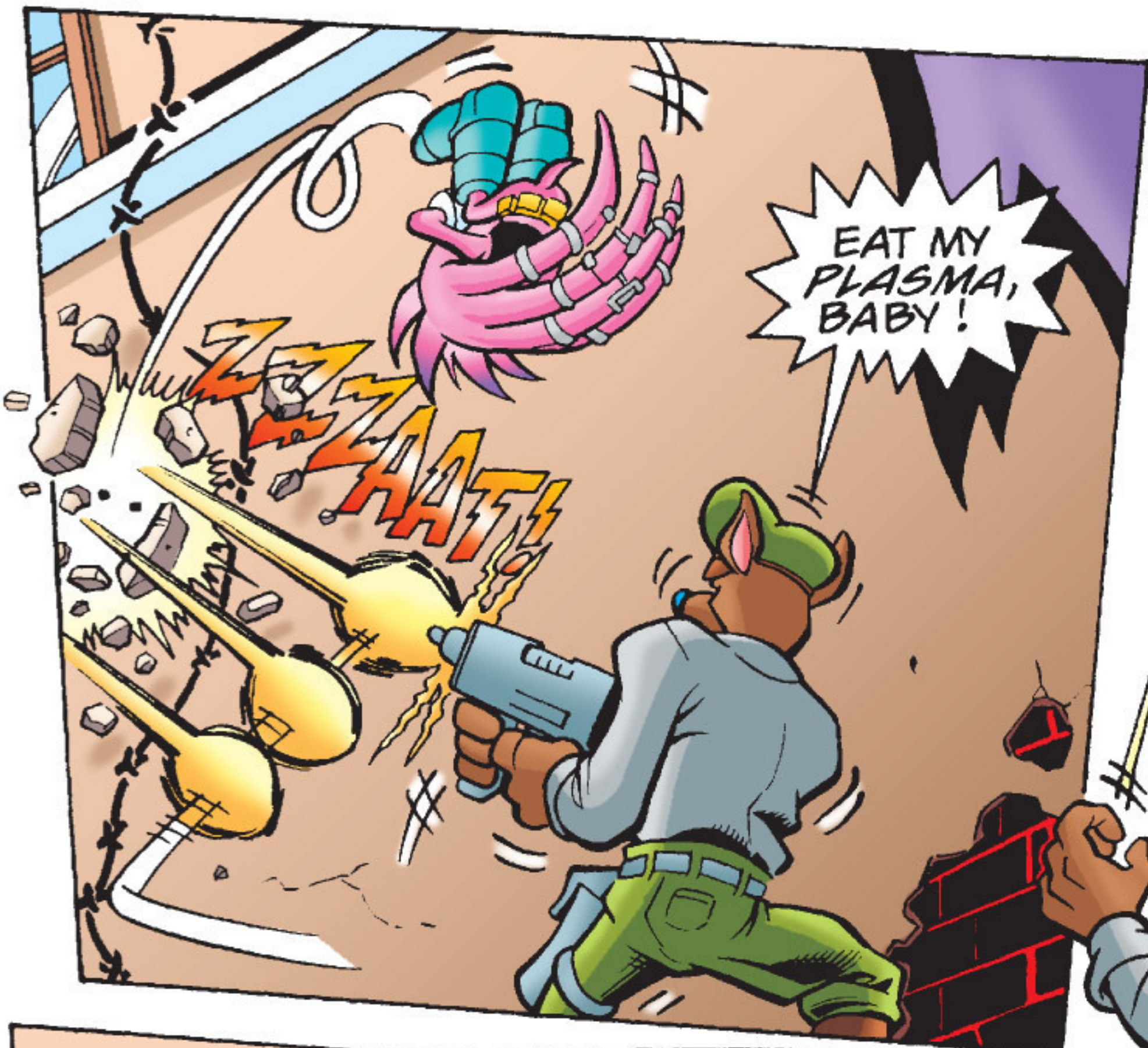










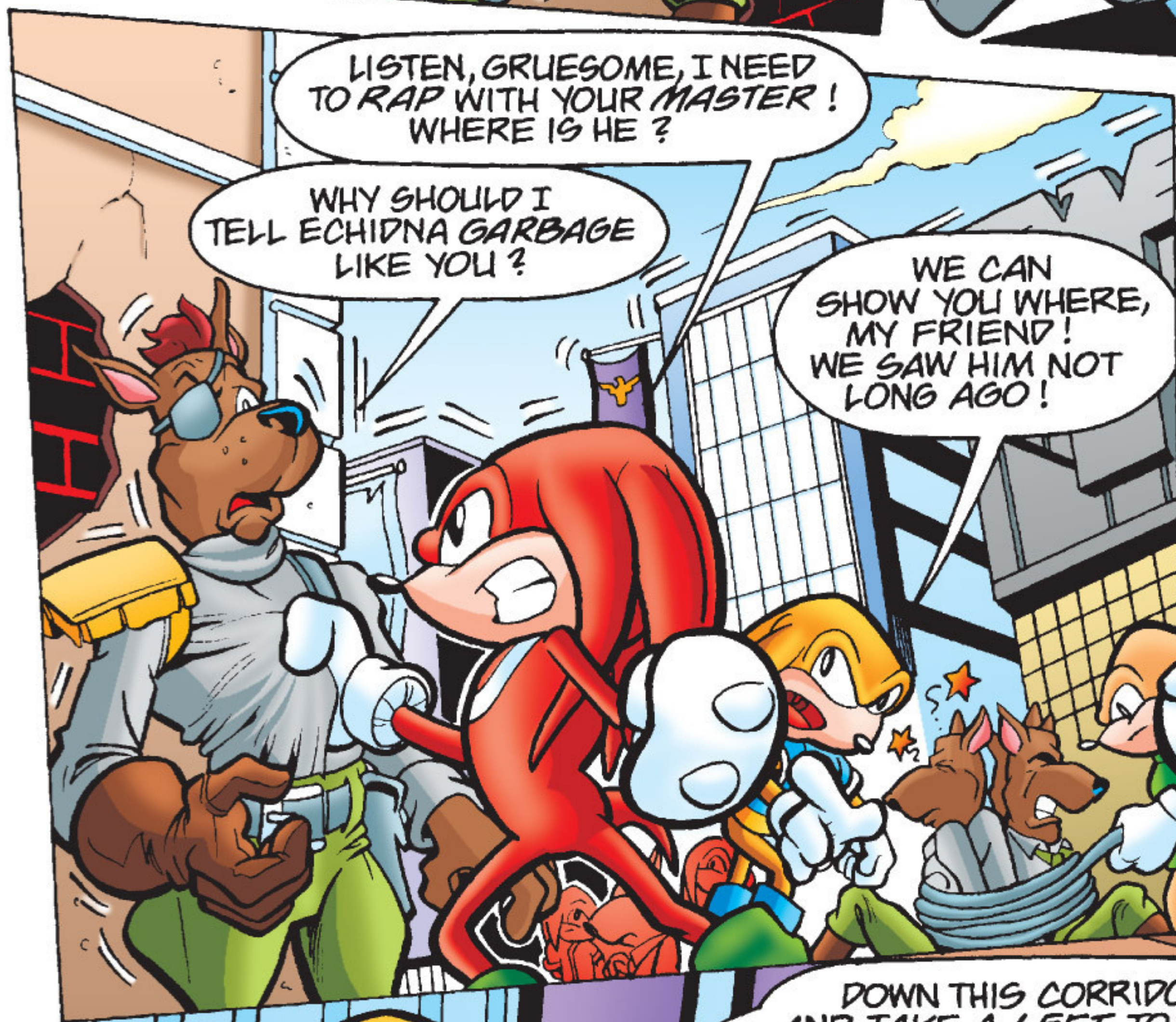


EAT MY PLASMA, BABY!



SORRY! WRONG FLAVOR!  
AT LEAST YOU'RE USEFUL FOR SOMETHING!

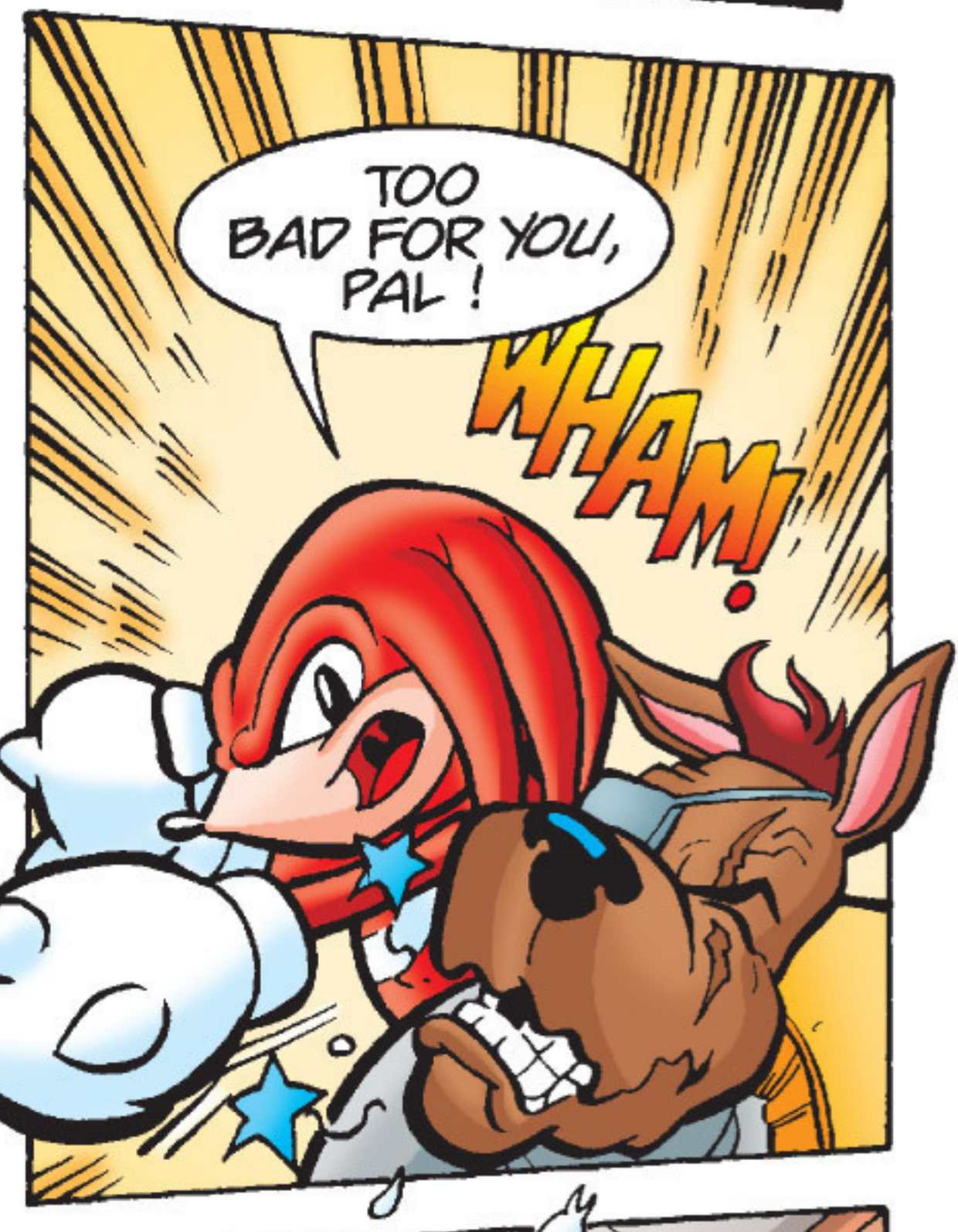
WHUMP!



LISTEN, GRUESOME, I NEED TO RAP WITH YOUR MASTER! WHERE IS HE?

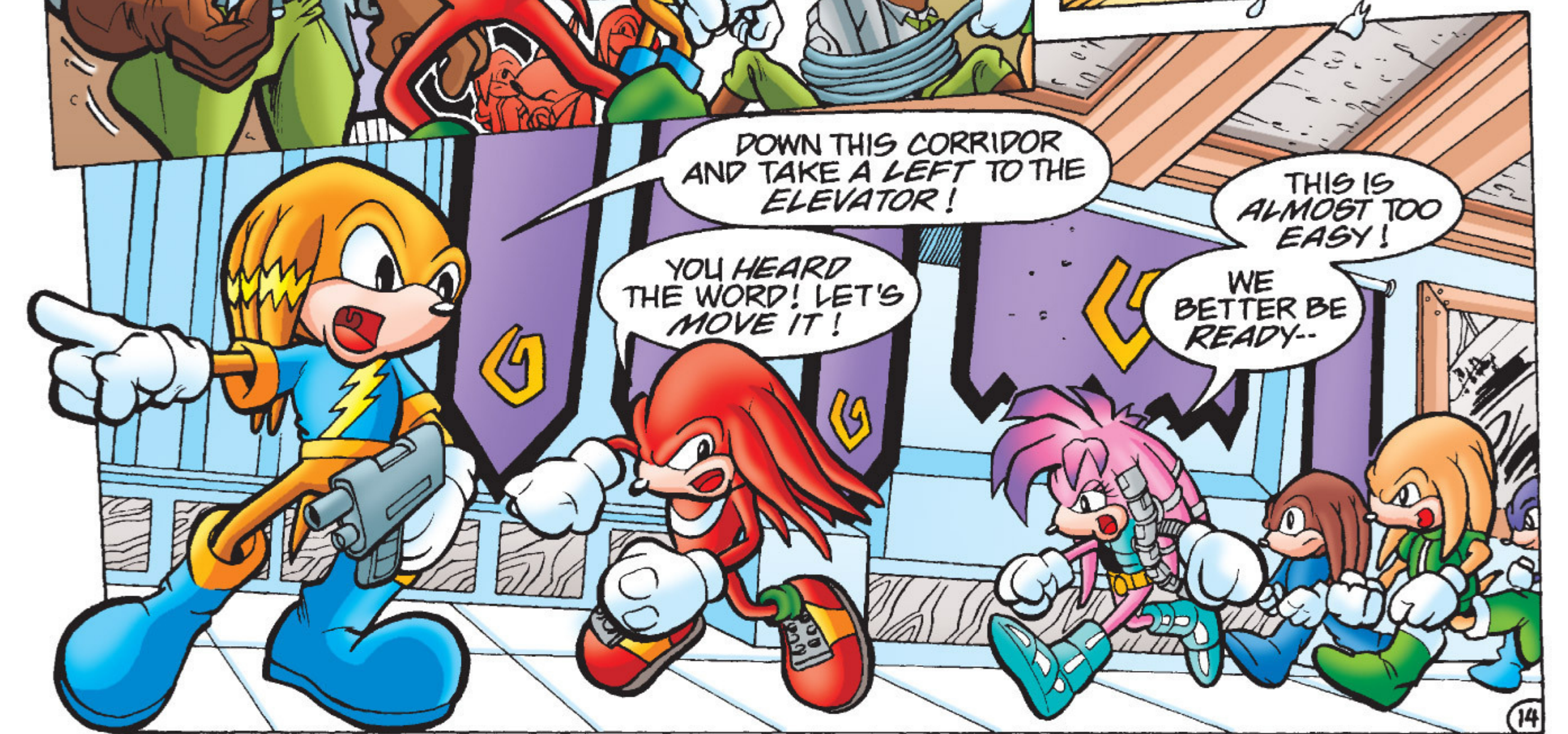
WHY SHOULD I TELL ECHIDNA GARBAGE LIKE YOU?

WE CAN SHOW YOU WHERE, MY FRIEND! WE SAW HIM NOT LONG AGO!



TOO BAD FOR YOU, PAL!

WHAM!



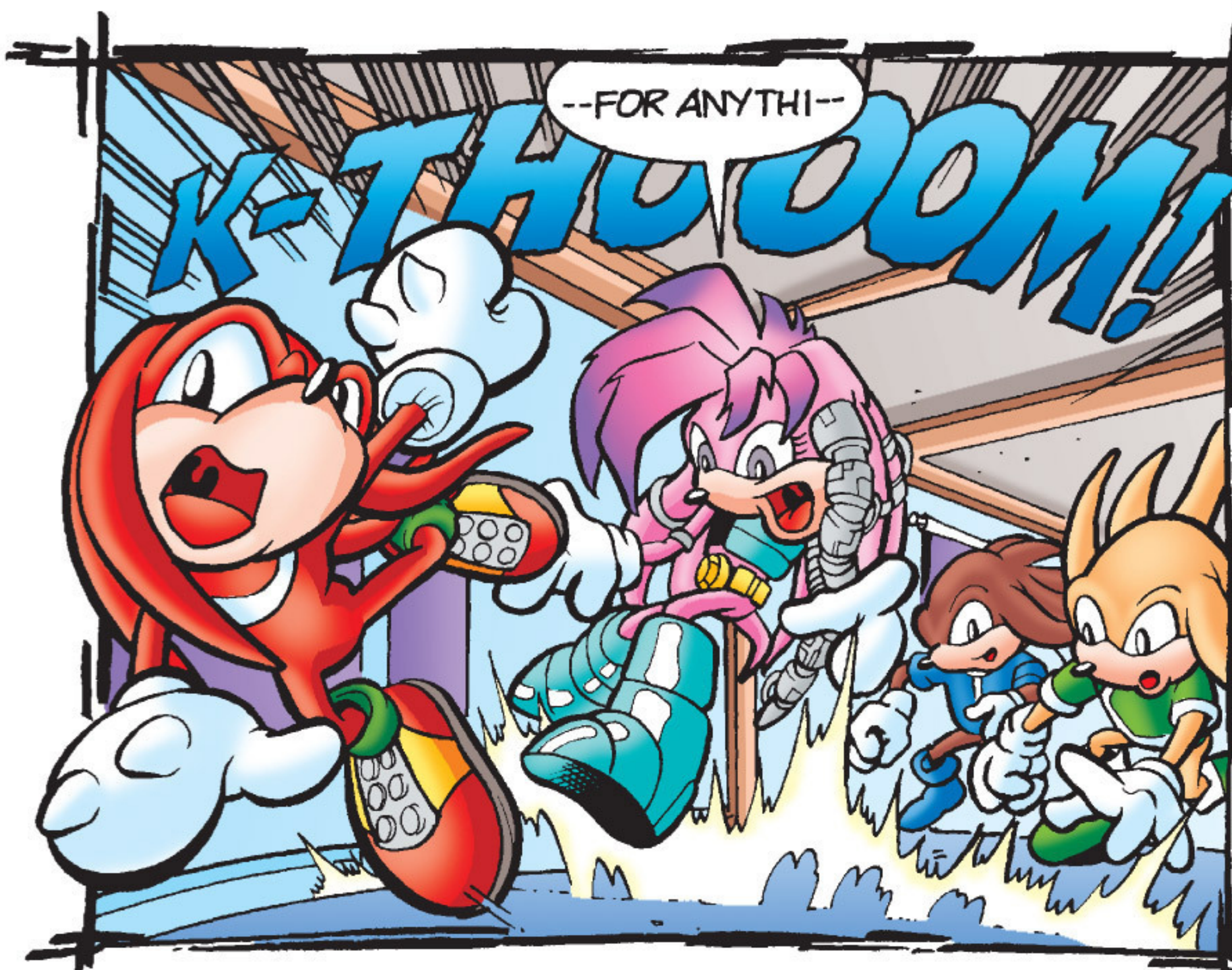
DOWN THIS CORRIDOR AND TAKE A LEFT TO THE ELEVATOR!

YOU HEARD THE WORD! LET'S MOVE IT!

THIS IS ALMOST TOO EASY!

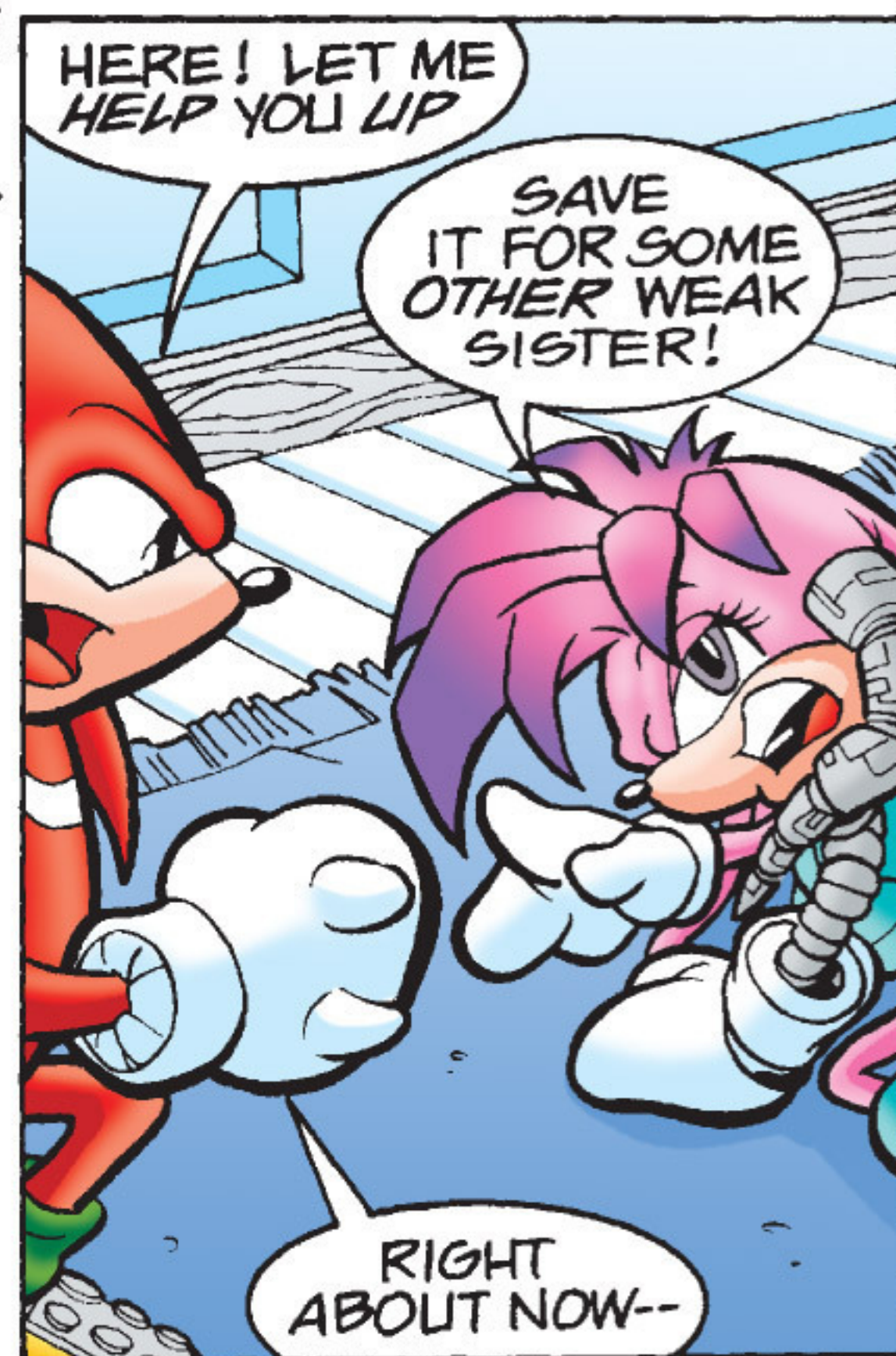
WE BETTER BE READY--





--FOR ANYTHI--

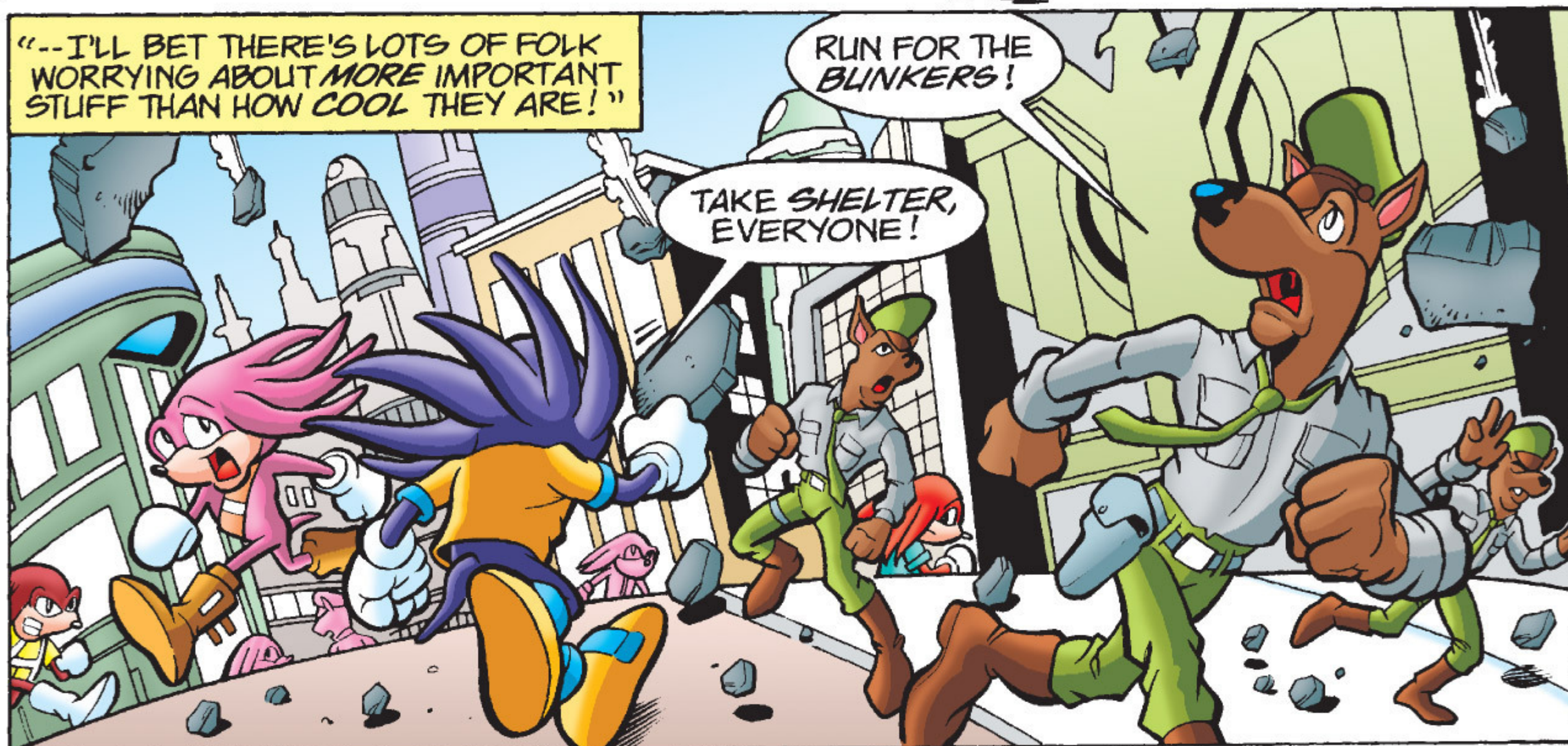
**K-T HOOOM!**



HERE! LET ME HELP YOU UP

SAVE IT FOR SOME OTHER WEAK SISTER!

RIGHT ABOUT NOW--



"--I'LL BET THERE'S LOTS OF FOLK WORRYING ABOUT MORE IMPORTANT STUFF THAN HOW COOL THEY ARE!"

RUN FOR THE BLINKERS!

TAKE SHELTER, EVERYONE!



THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW, DEO!

ONCE AGAIN, I HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE!

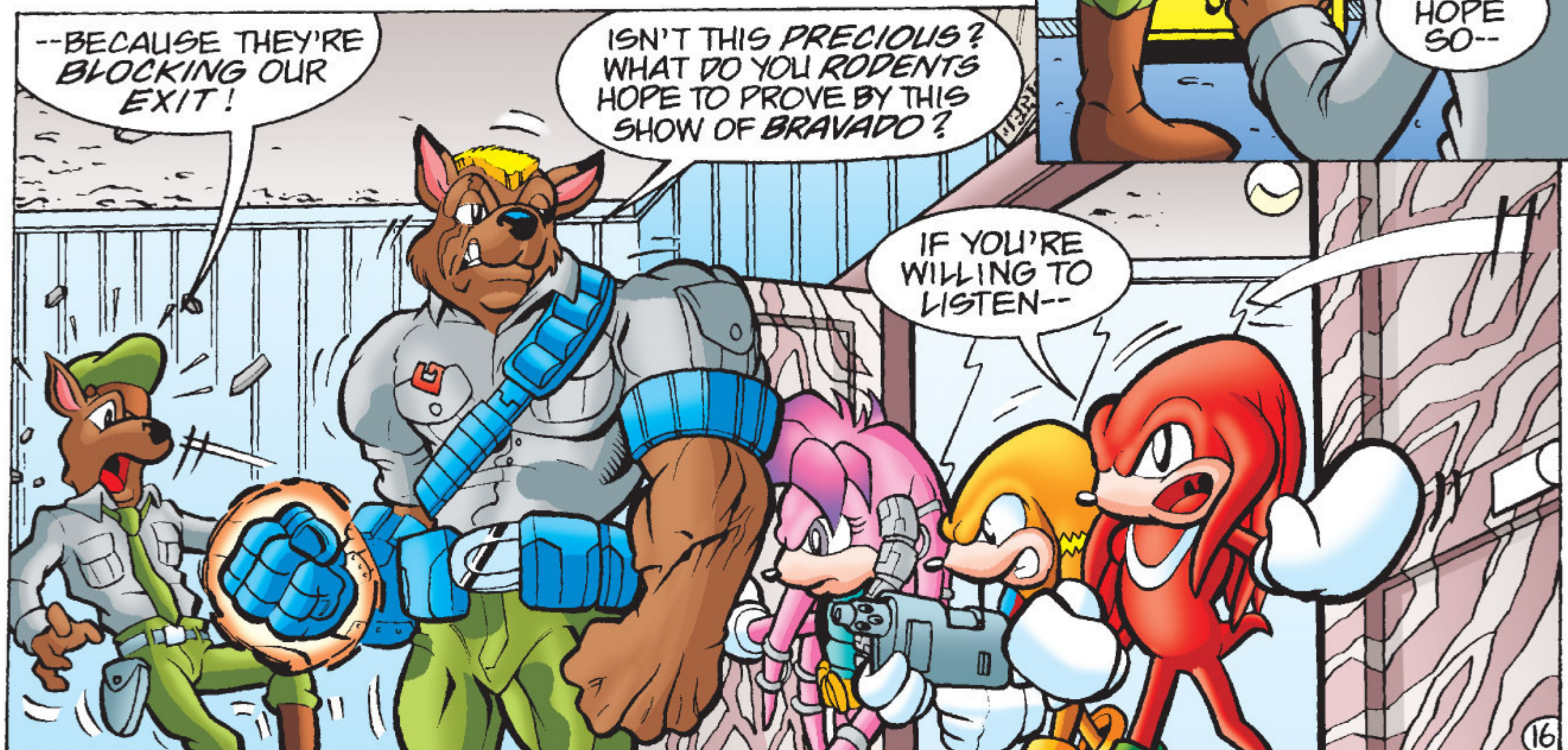
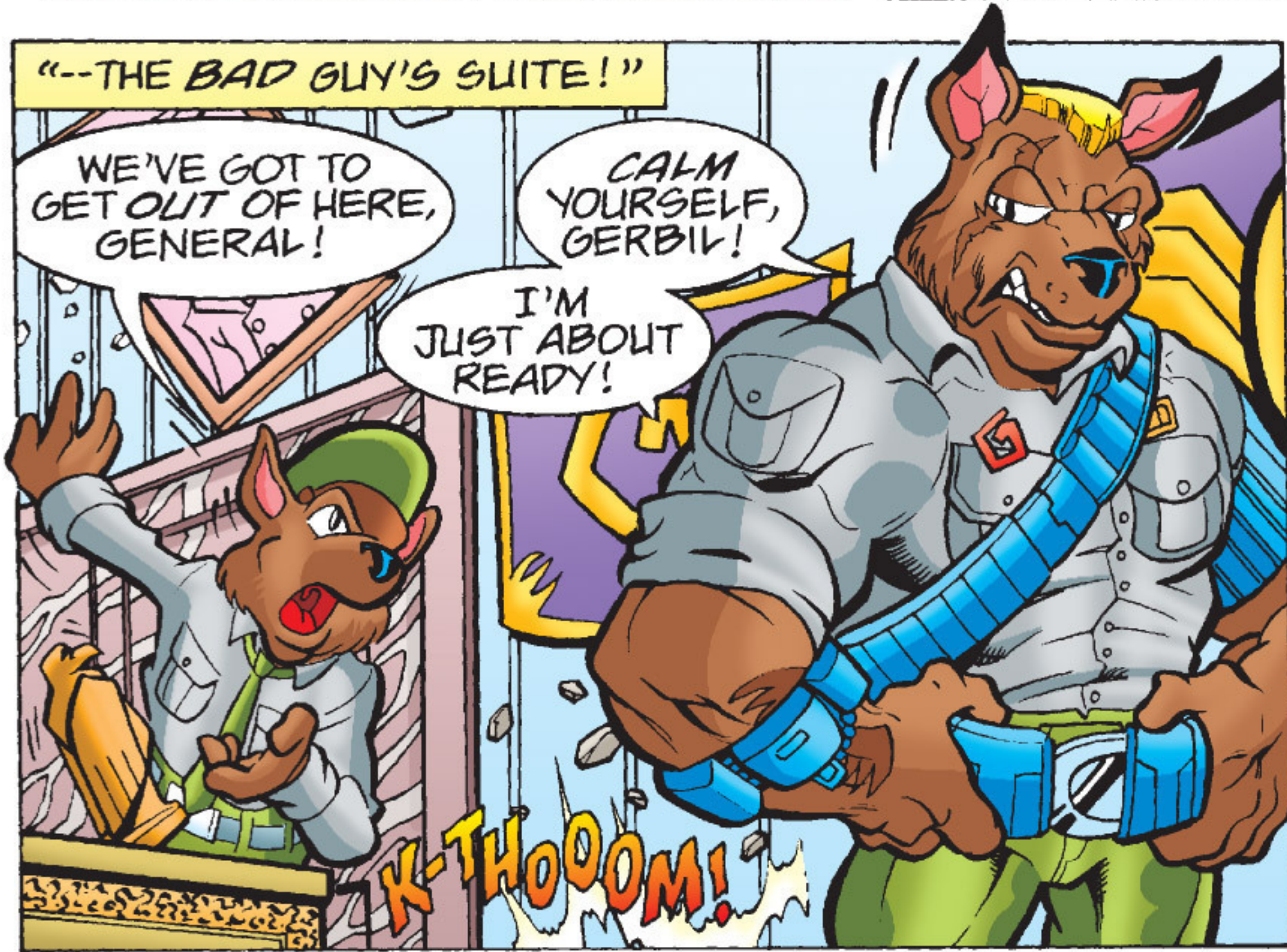
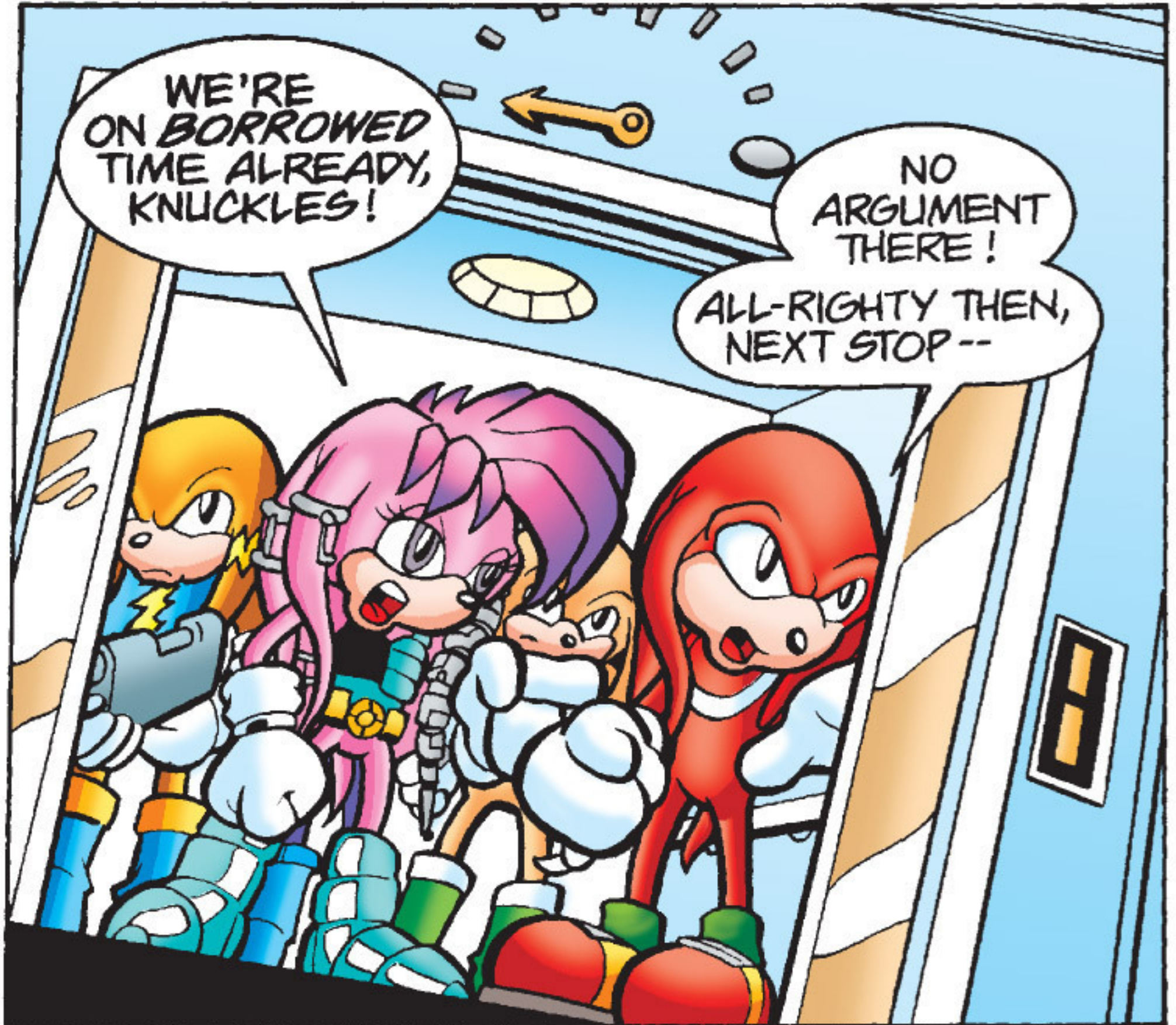
AND WHAT THE REPERCUSSIONS WILL BE, I CANNOT EVEN IMAGINE!



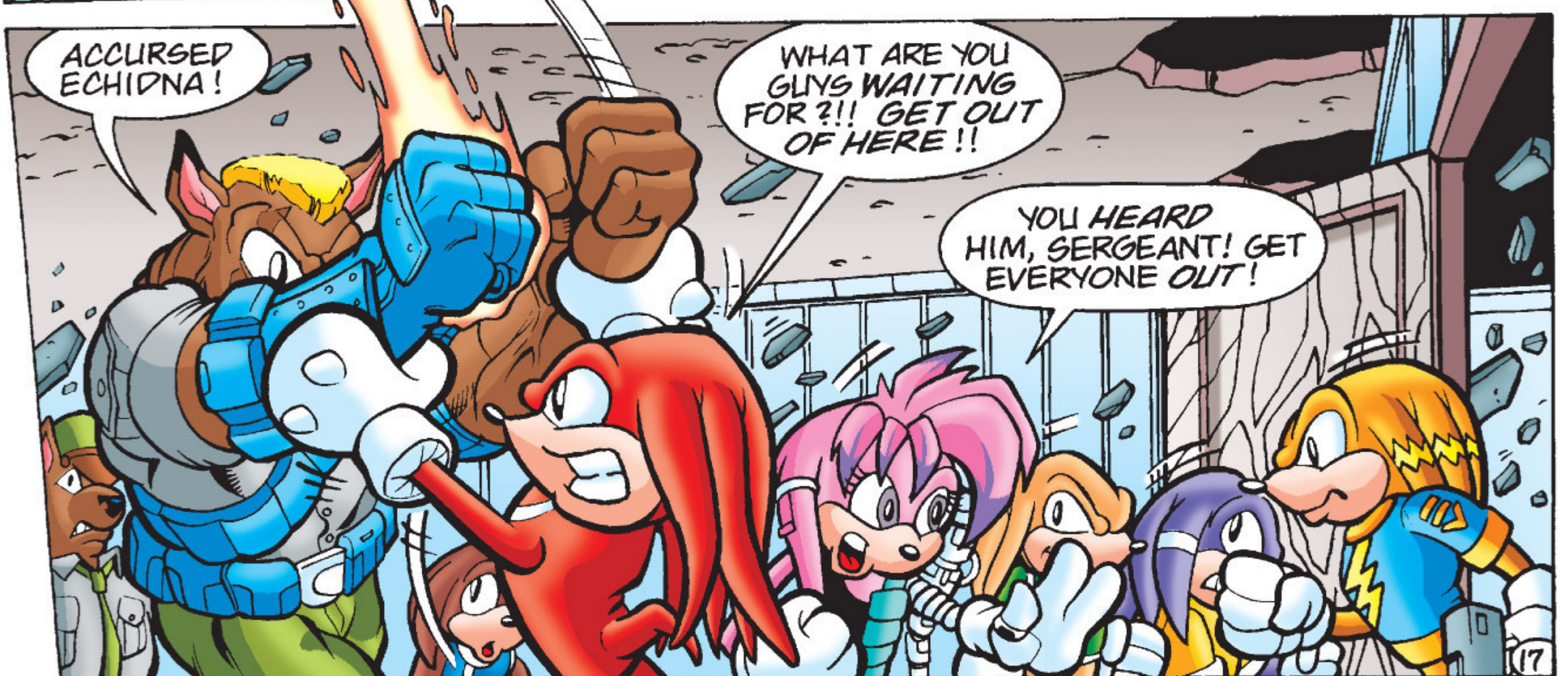
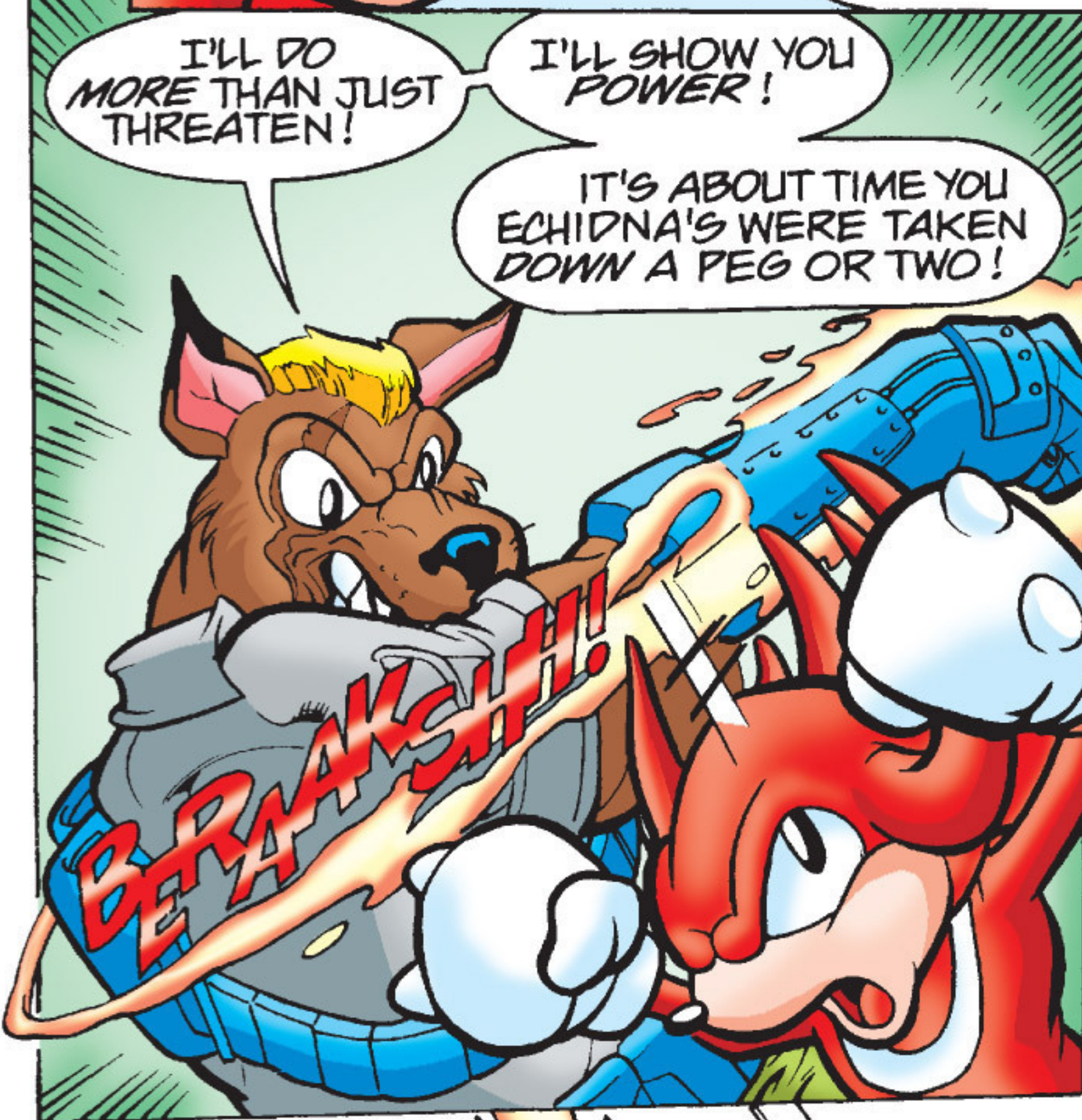
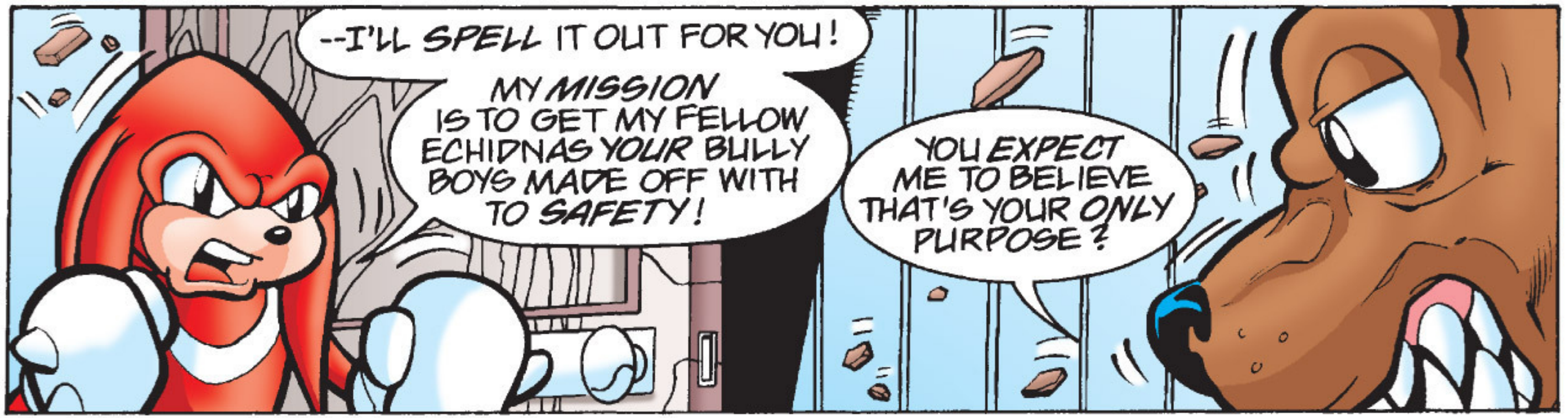
SIGNAL ARCHIMEDES-- AND TELL HIM--

TO GET EVERYONE TO SAFETY!

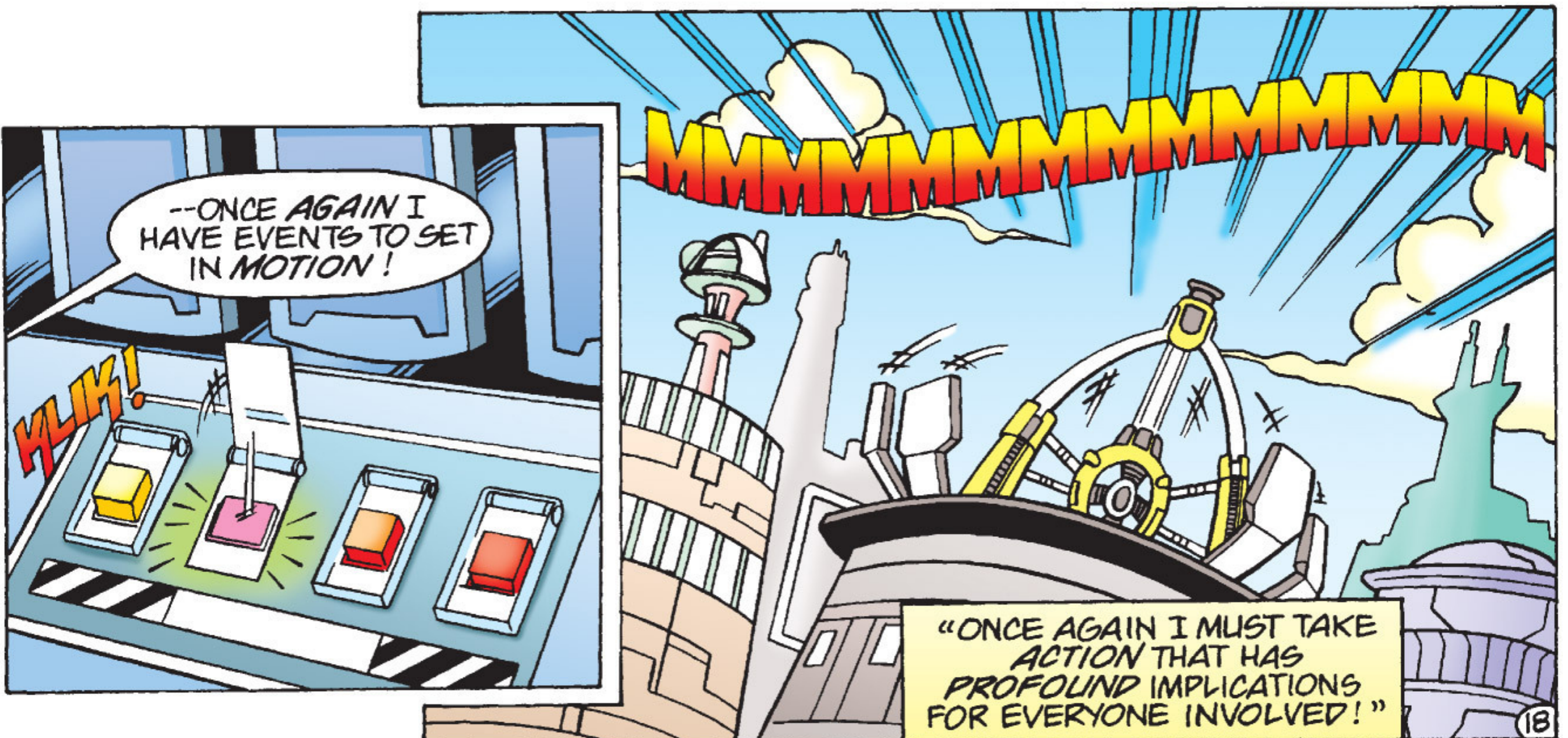
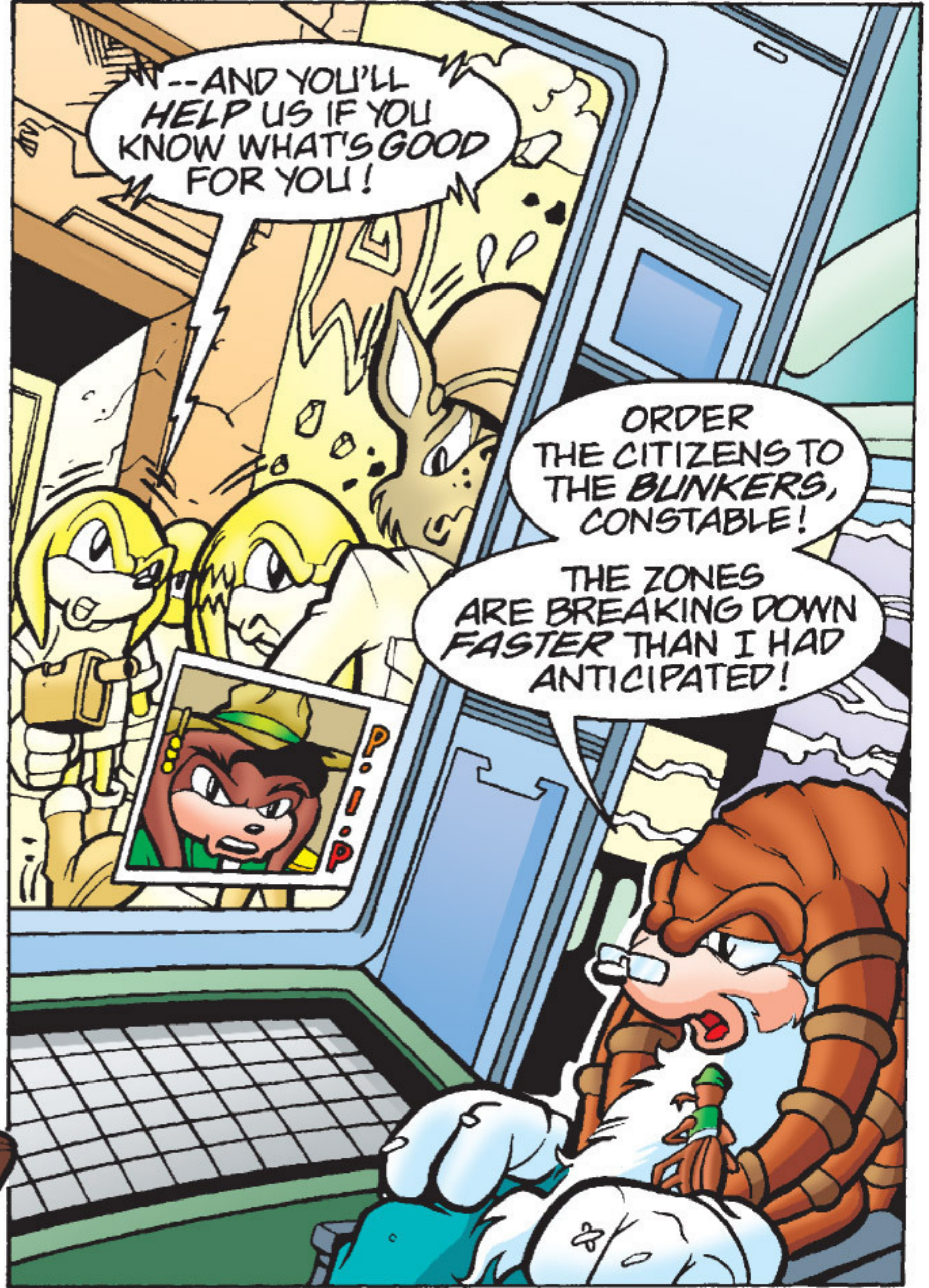




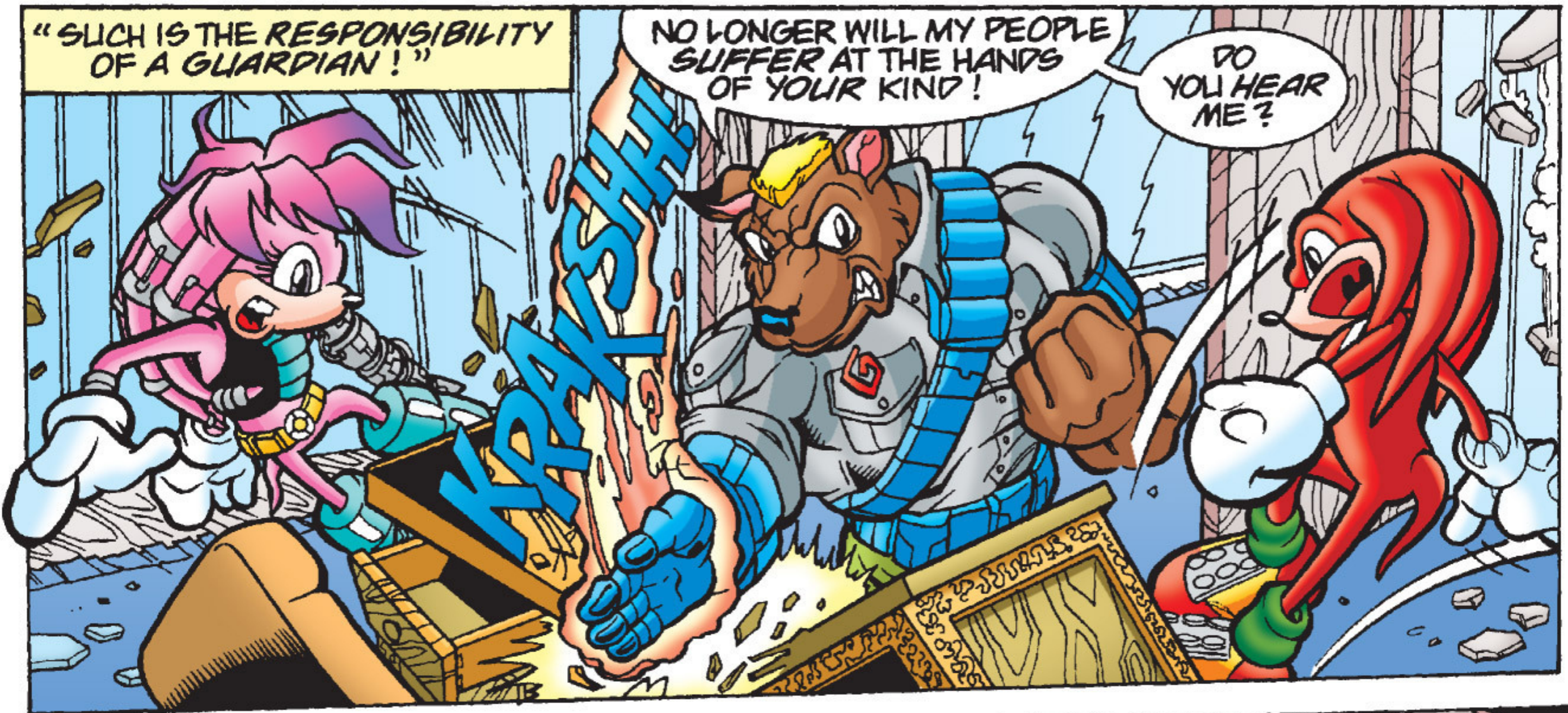










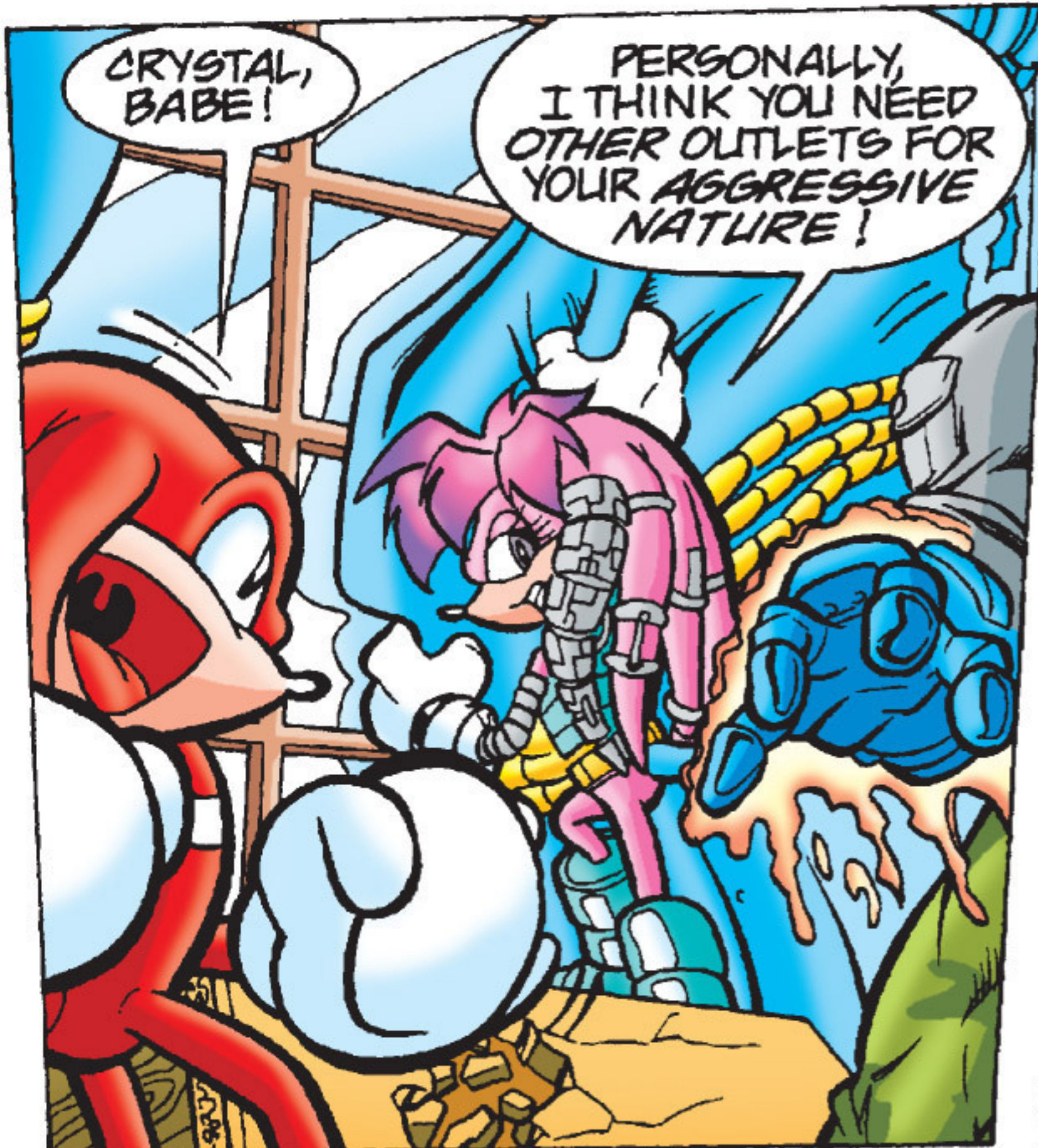


"SUCH IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A GUARDIAN!"

NO LONGER WILL MY PEOPLE SUFFER AT THE HANDS OF YOUR KIND!

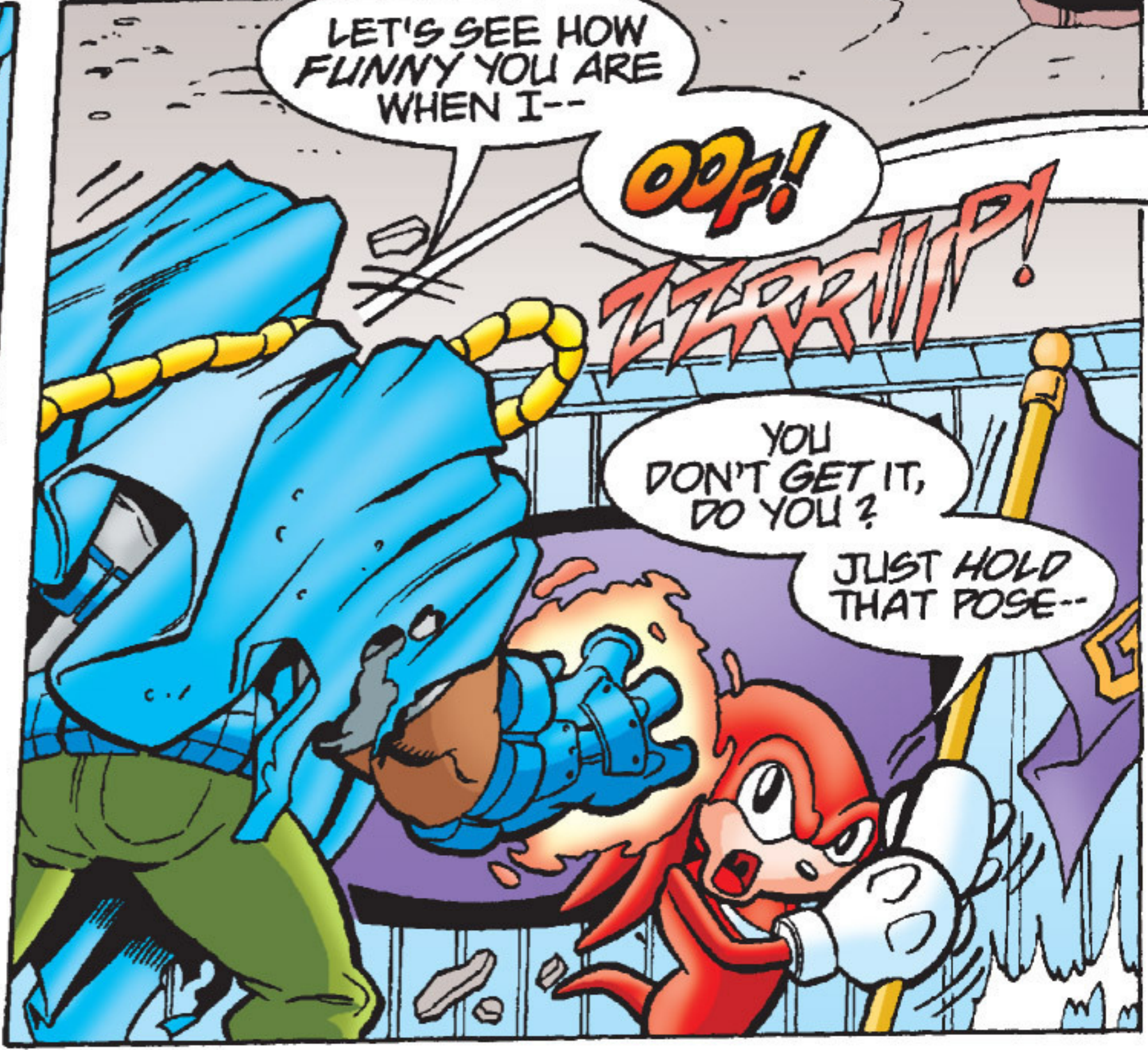
DO YOU HEAR ME?

KRAKSHH!



CRYSTAL, BABE!

PERSONALLY, I THINK YOU NEED OTHER OUTLETS FOR YOUR AGGRESSIVE NATURE!



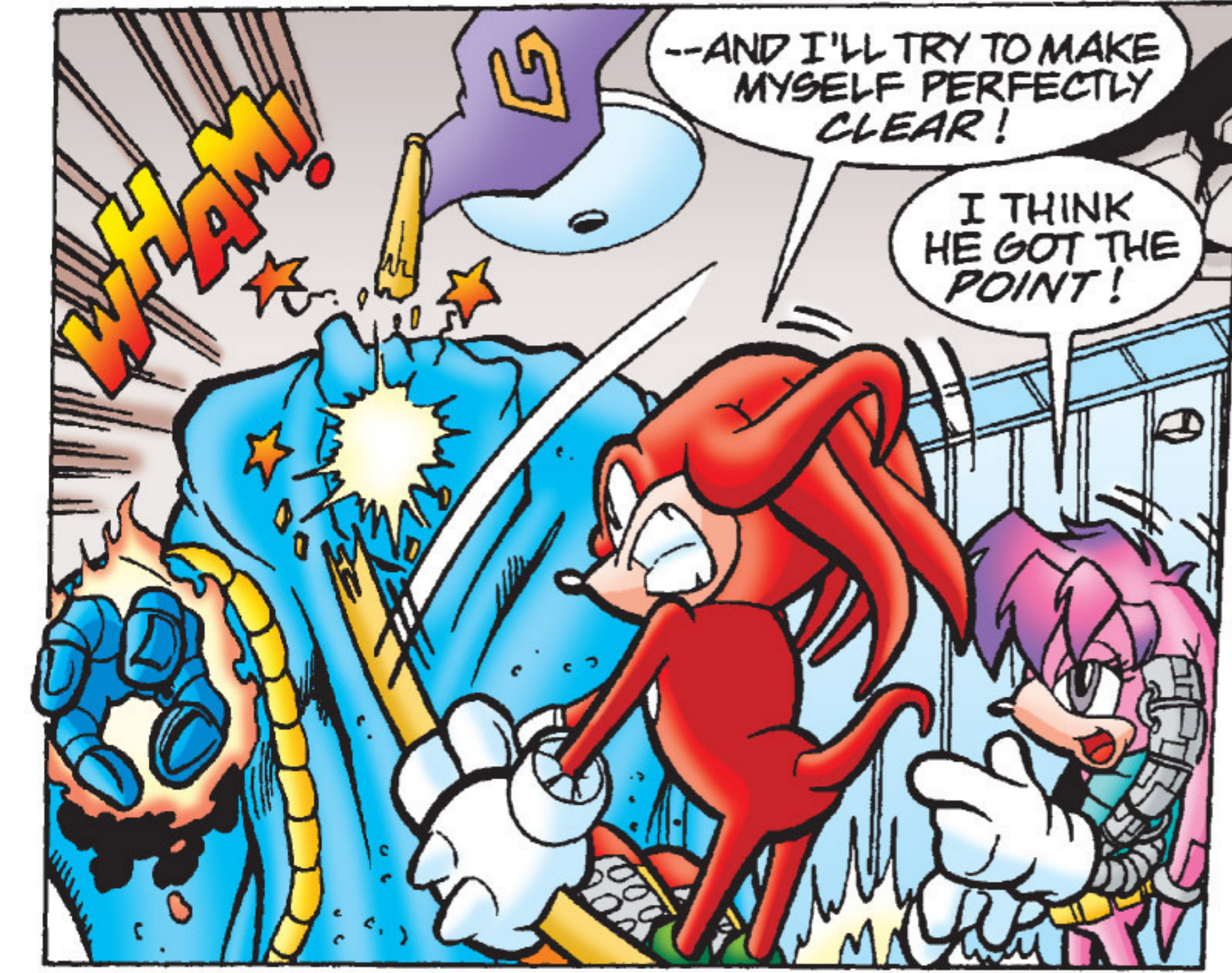
LET'S SEE HOW FUNNY YOU ARE WHEN I--

OOF!

ZRRRIP!

YOU DON'T GET IT, DO YOU?

JUST HOLD THAT POSE--



--AND I'LL TRY TO MAKE MYSELF PERFECTLY CLEAR!

I THINK HE GOT THE POINT!

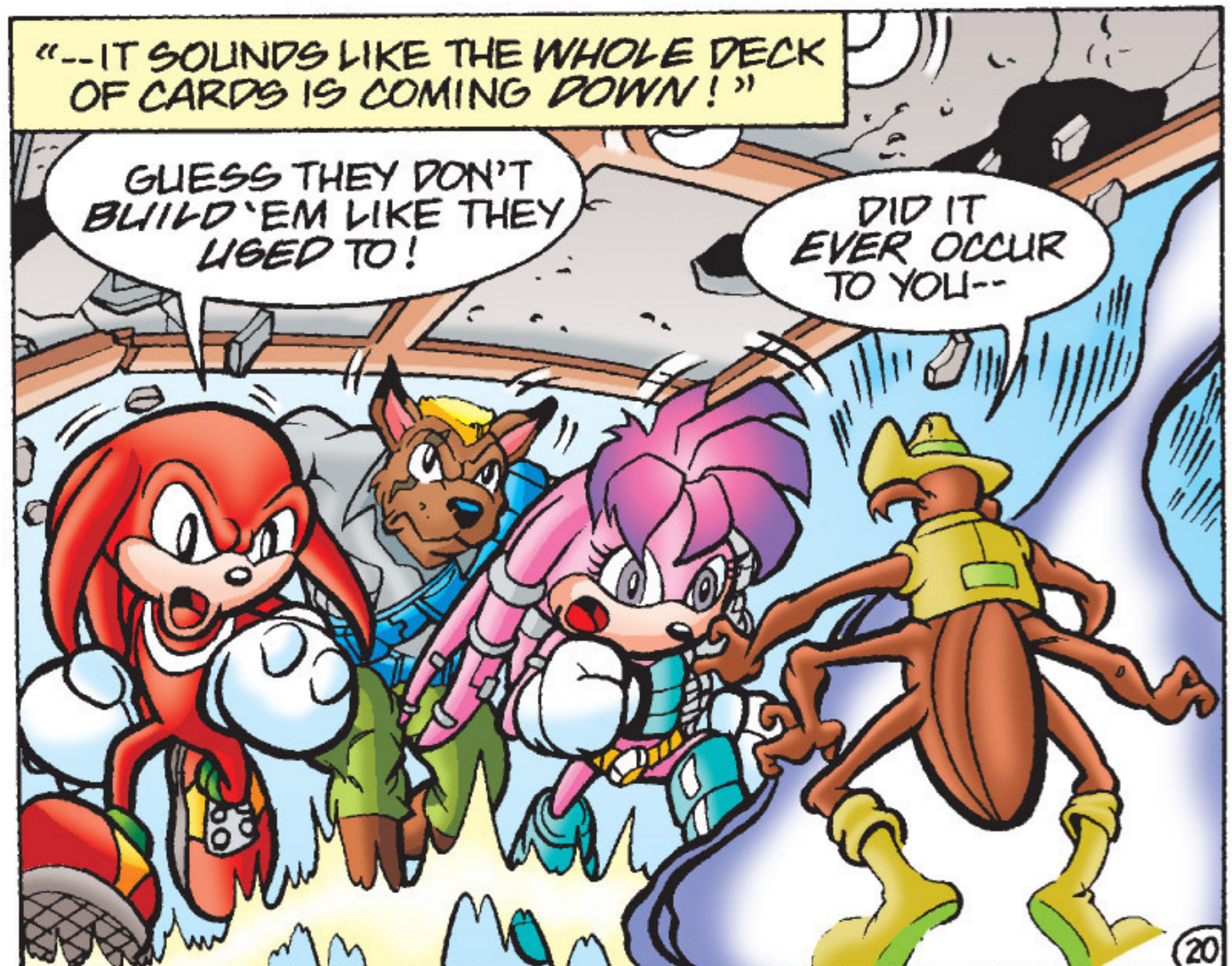
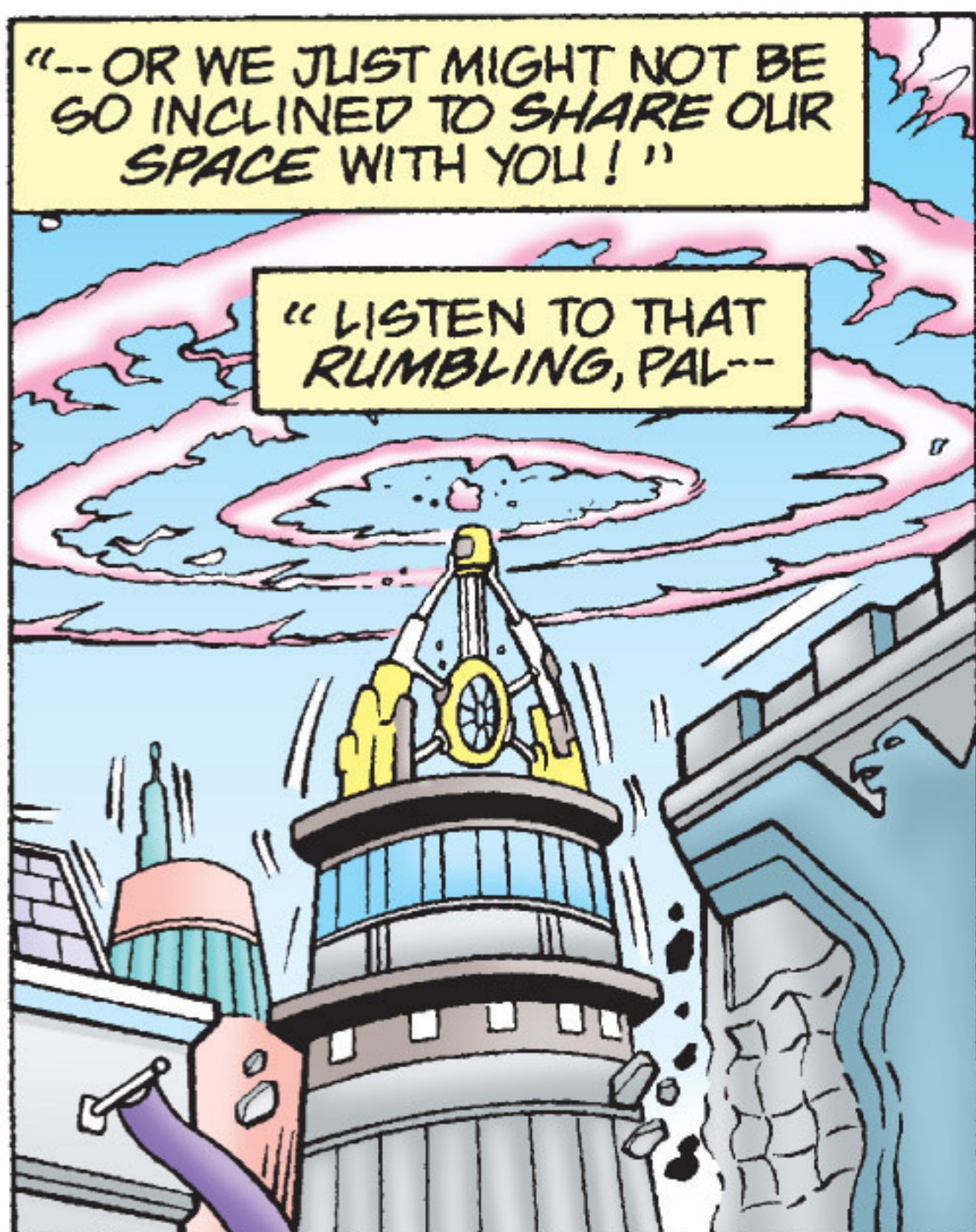
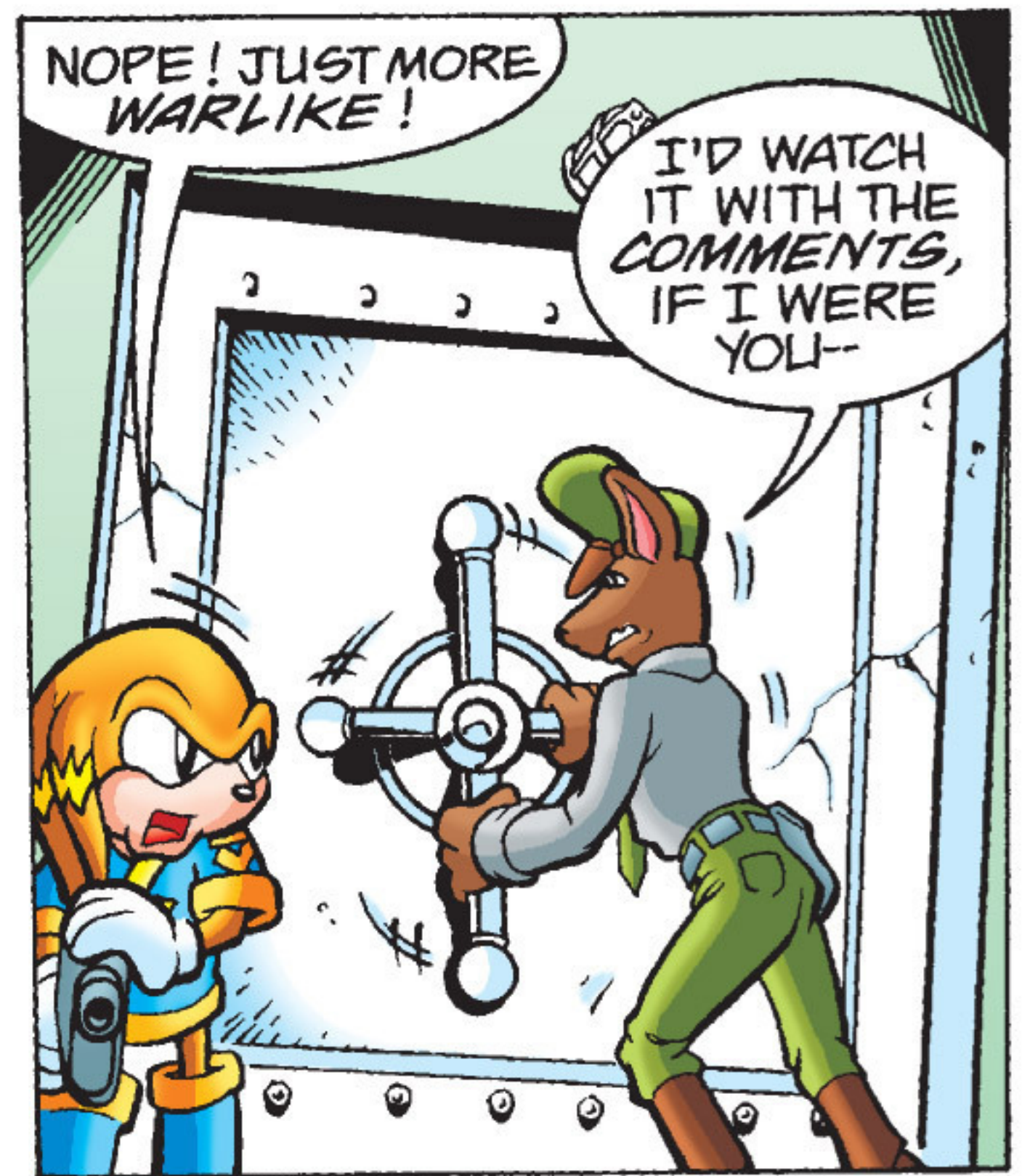
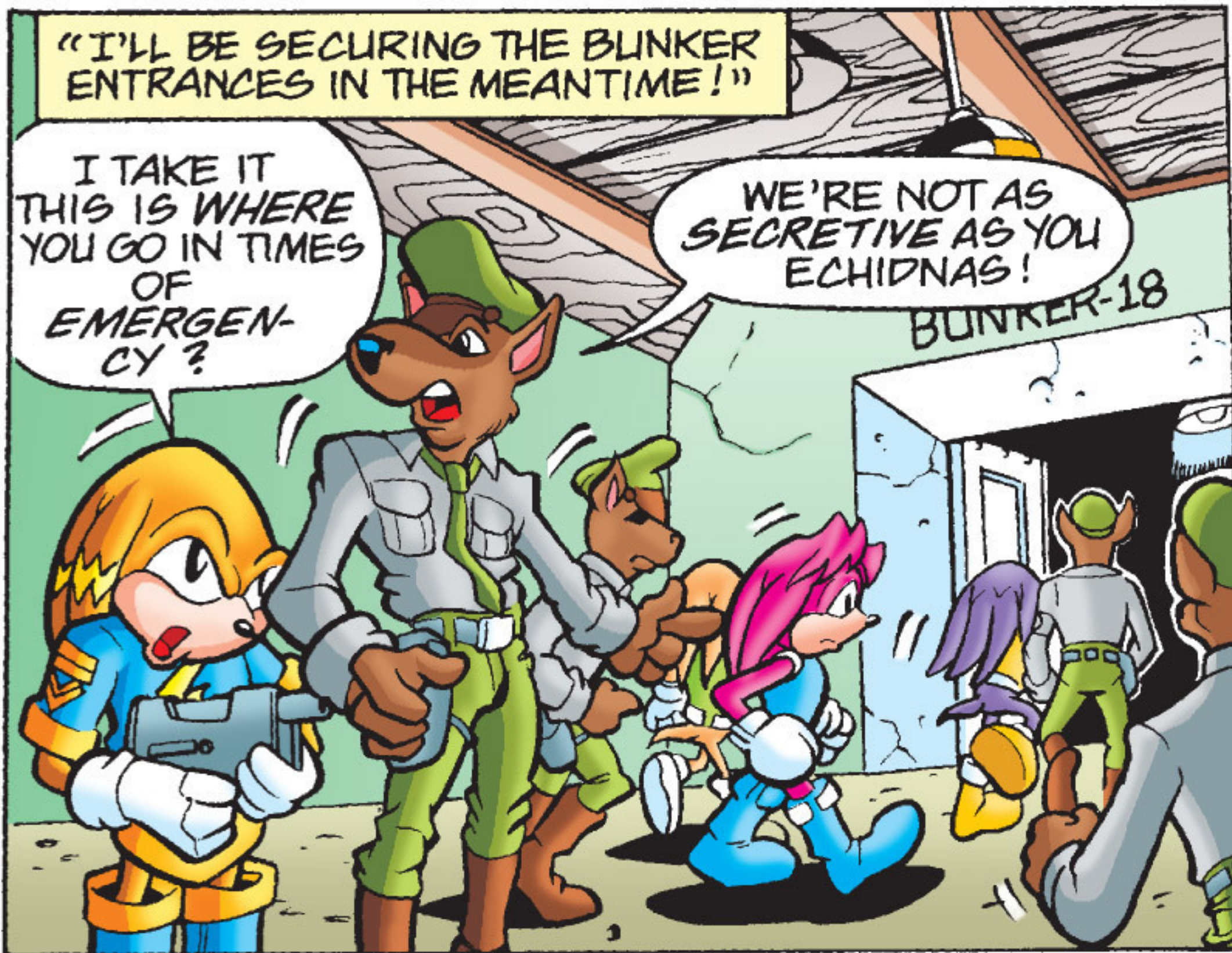
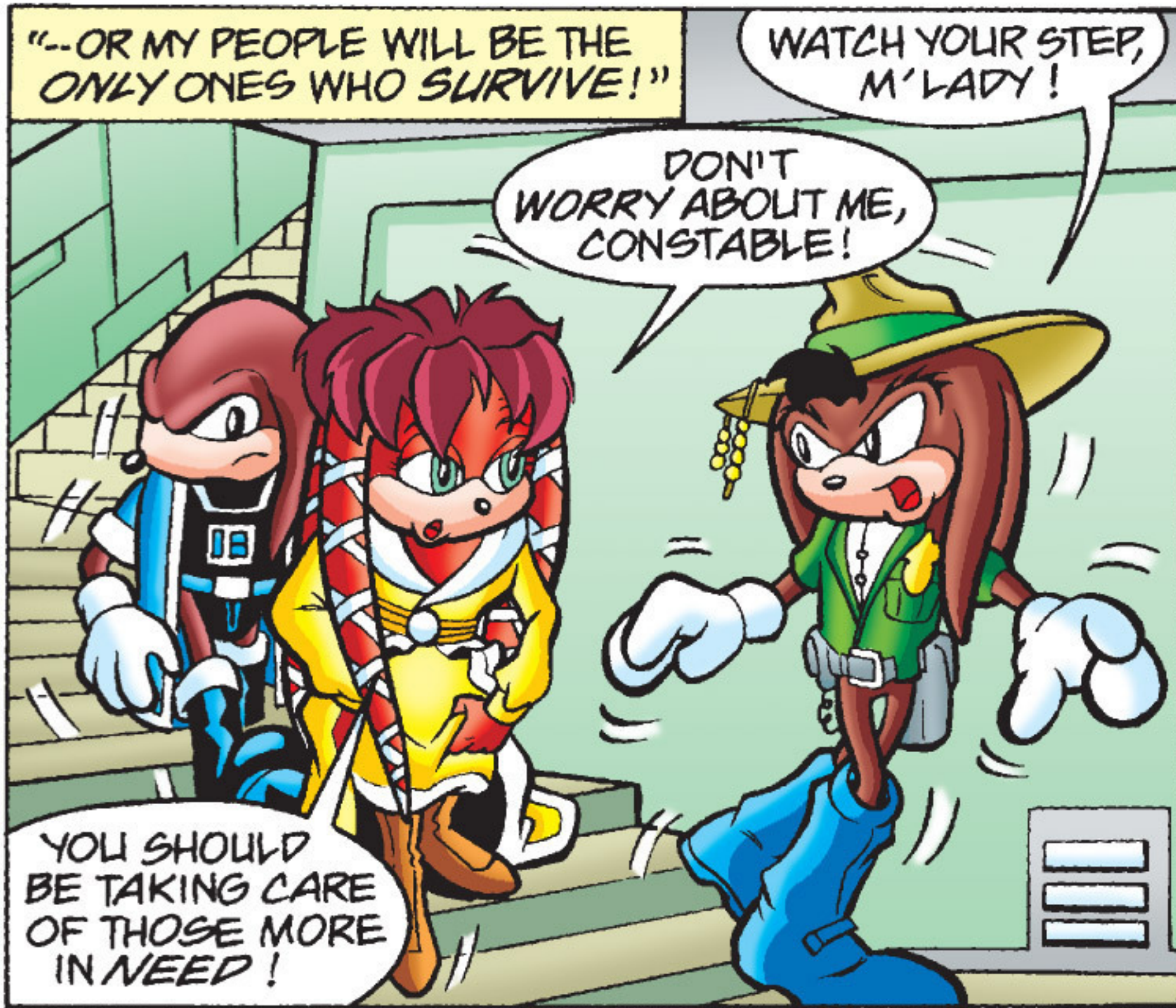


YOU AIN'T EXACTLY MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE, BUB--

--BUT I NEED YOU TO GET YOUR THUGS TO GO ALONG WITH THE PROGRAM!

SO WE EITHER CALL A TRUCE--



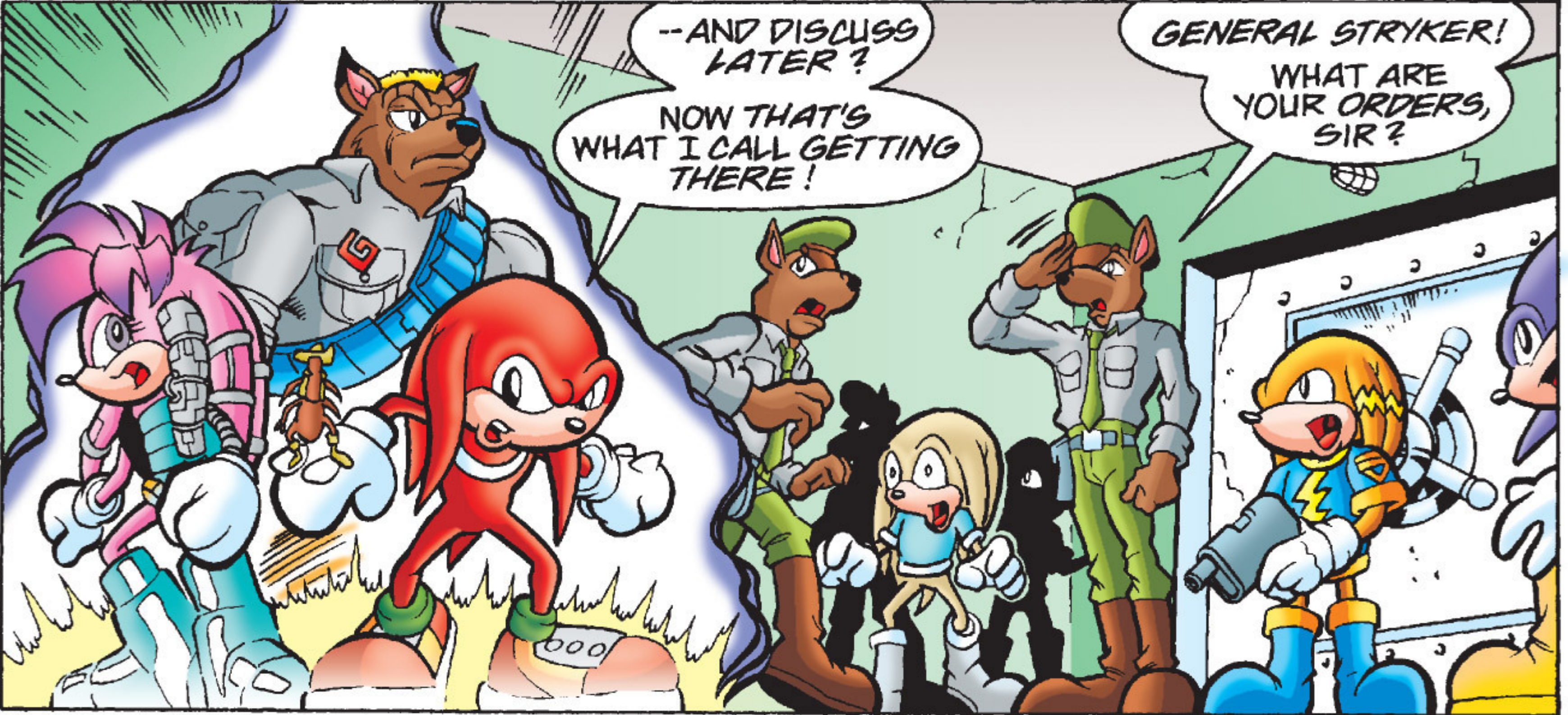




"--THERE ARE SOMETIMES THINGS BEYOND OUR CONTROL?"

"WHY DON'T WE SPEEDADDDLE FIRST--"

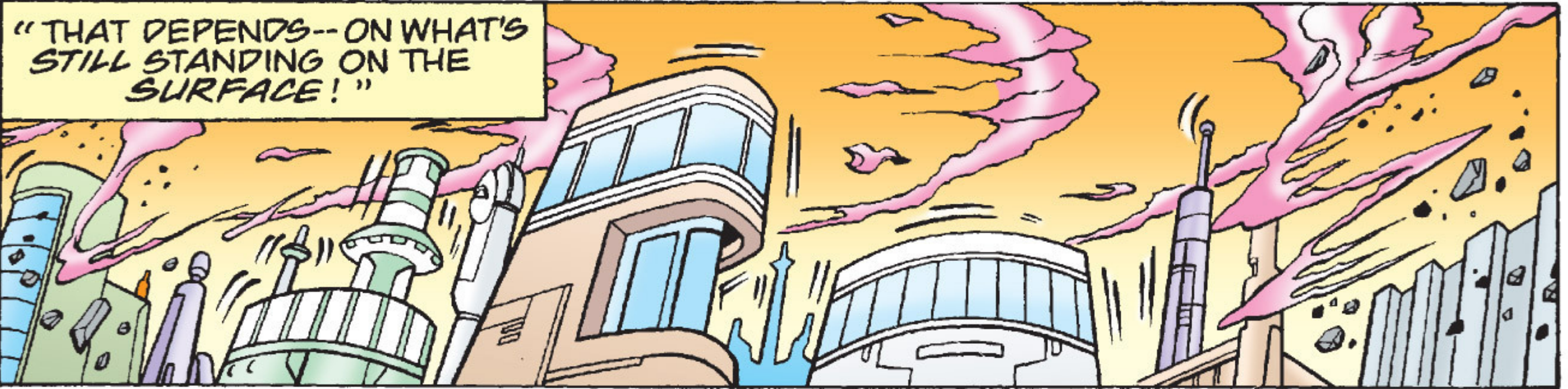
**BARRHUM!** **KRA-KROOM!**



--AND DISCUSS LATER?  
NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL GETTING THERE!

GENERAL STRYKER!  
WHAT ARE YOUR ORDERS, SIR?

"THAT DEPENDS-- ON WHAT'S STILL STANDING ON THE SURFACE!"



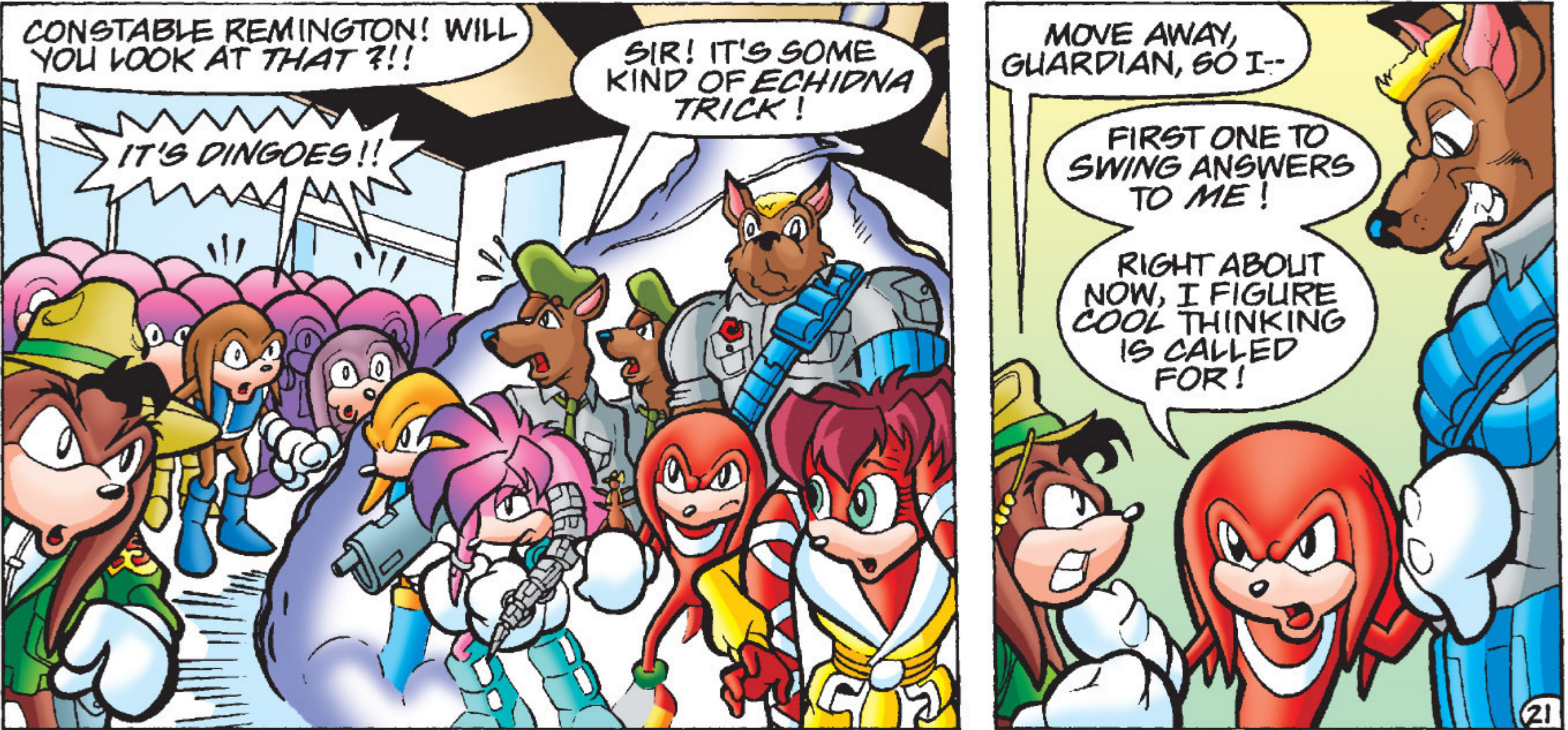
CONSTABLE REMINGTON! WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT?!!

SIR! IT'S SOME KIND OF ECHIDNA TRICK!

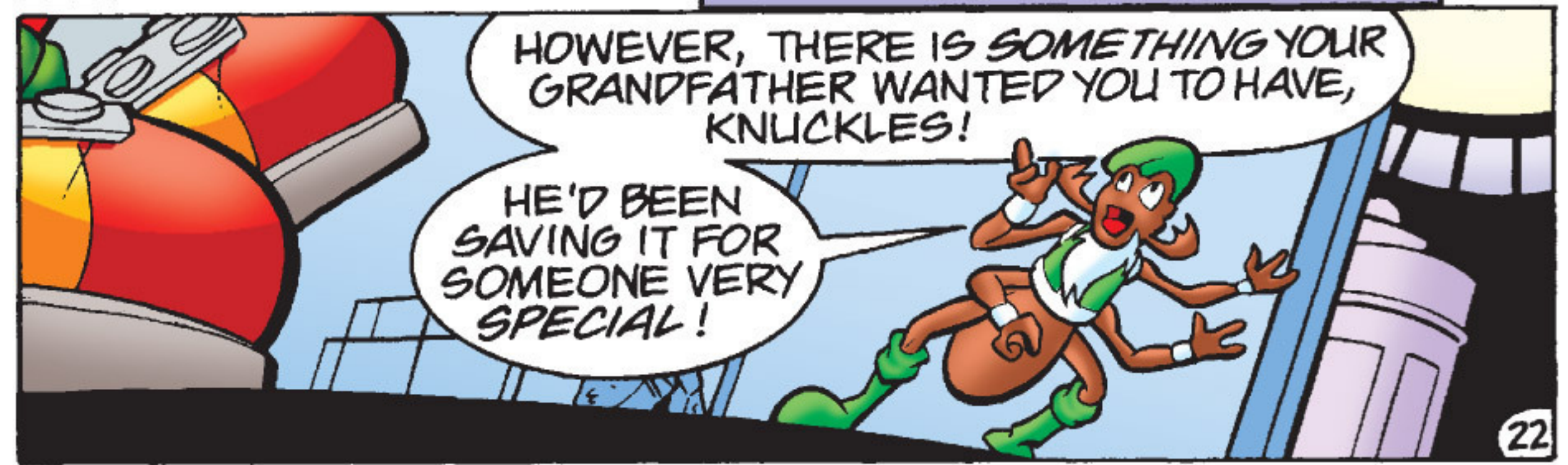
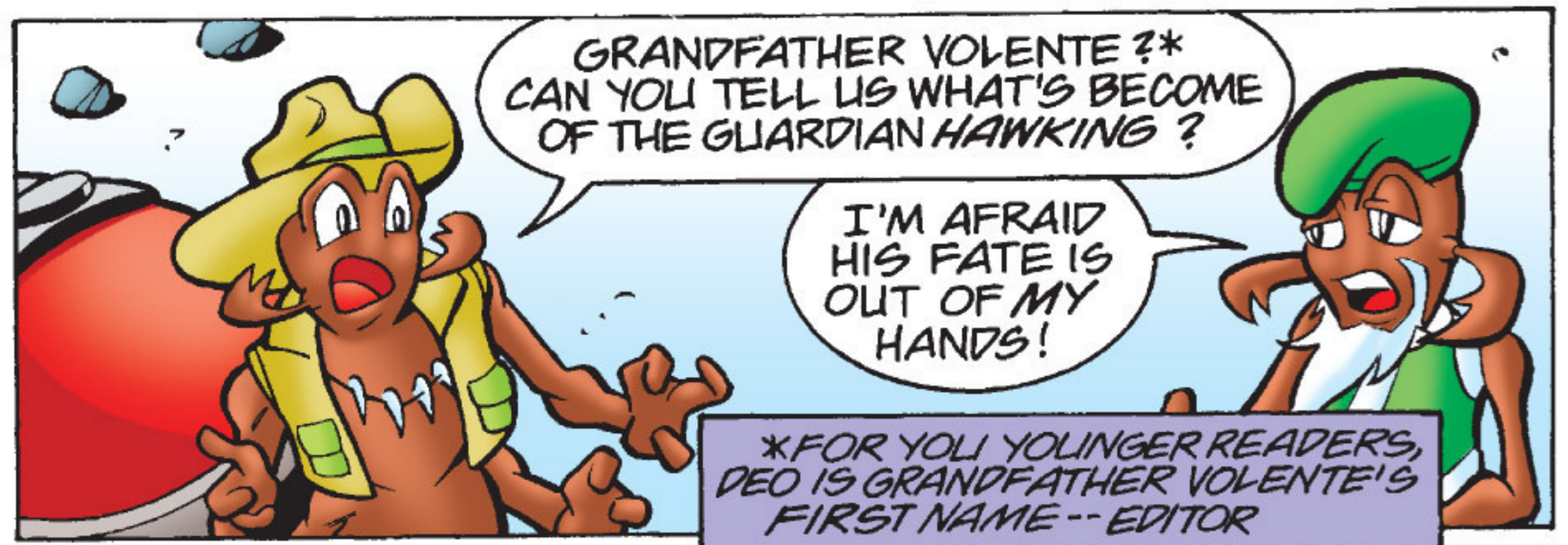
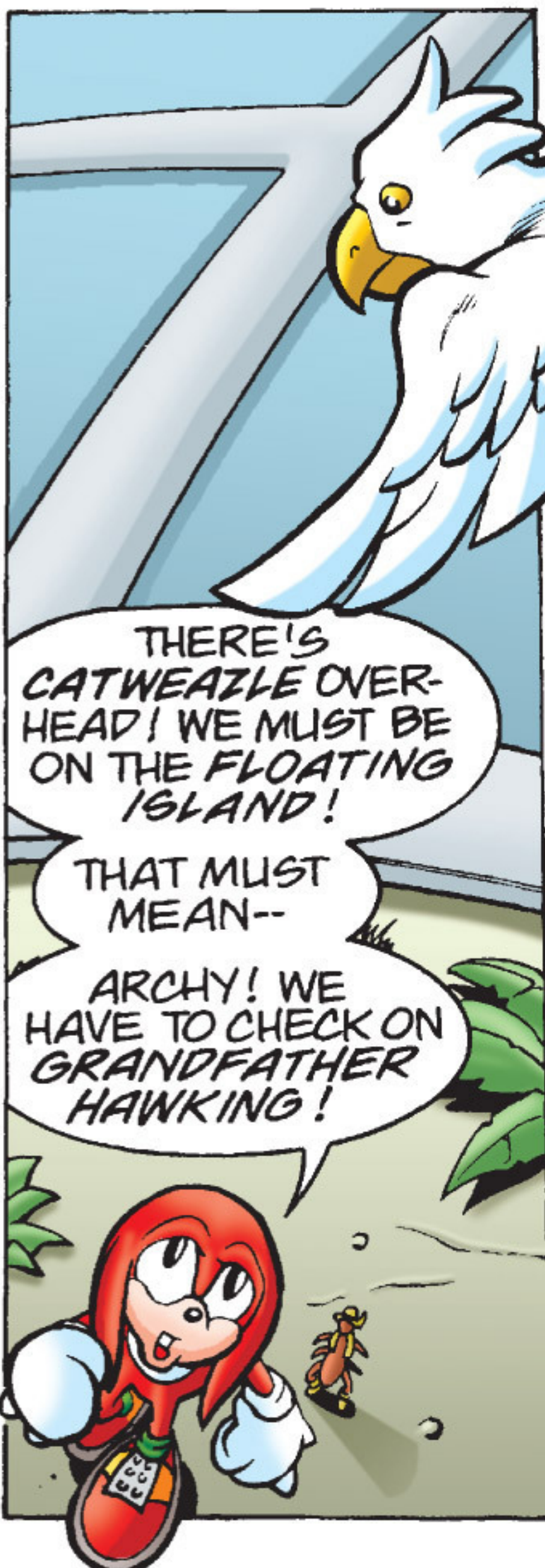
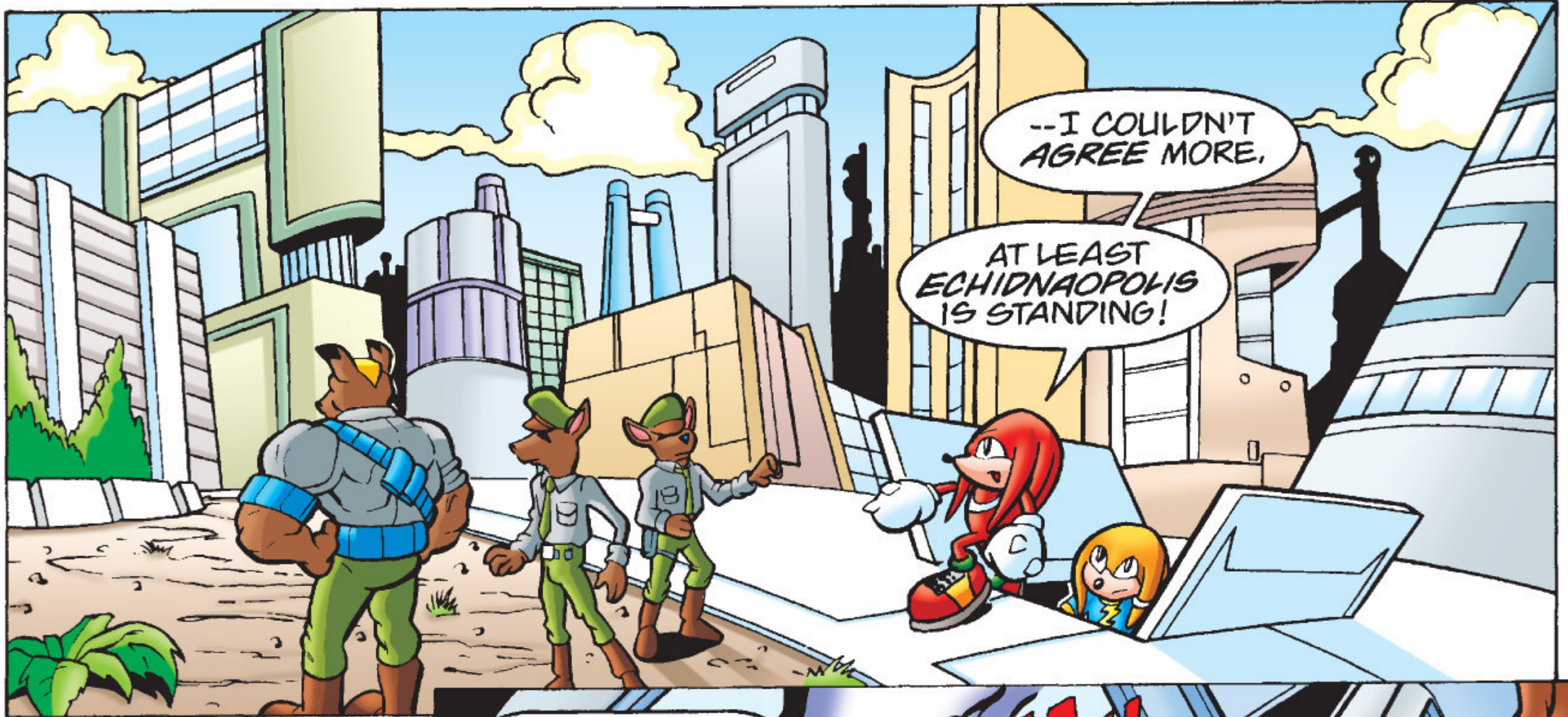
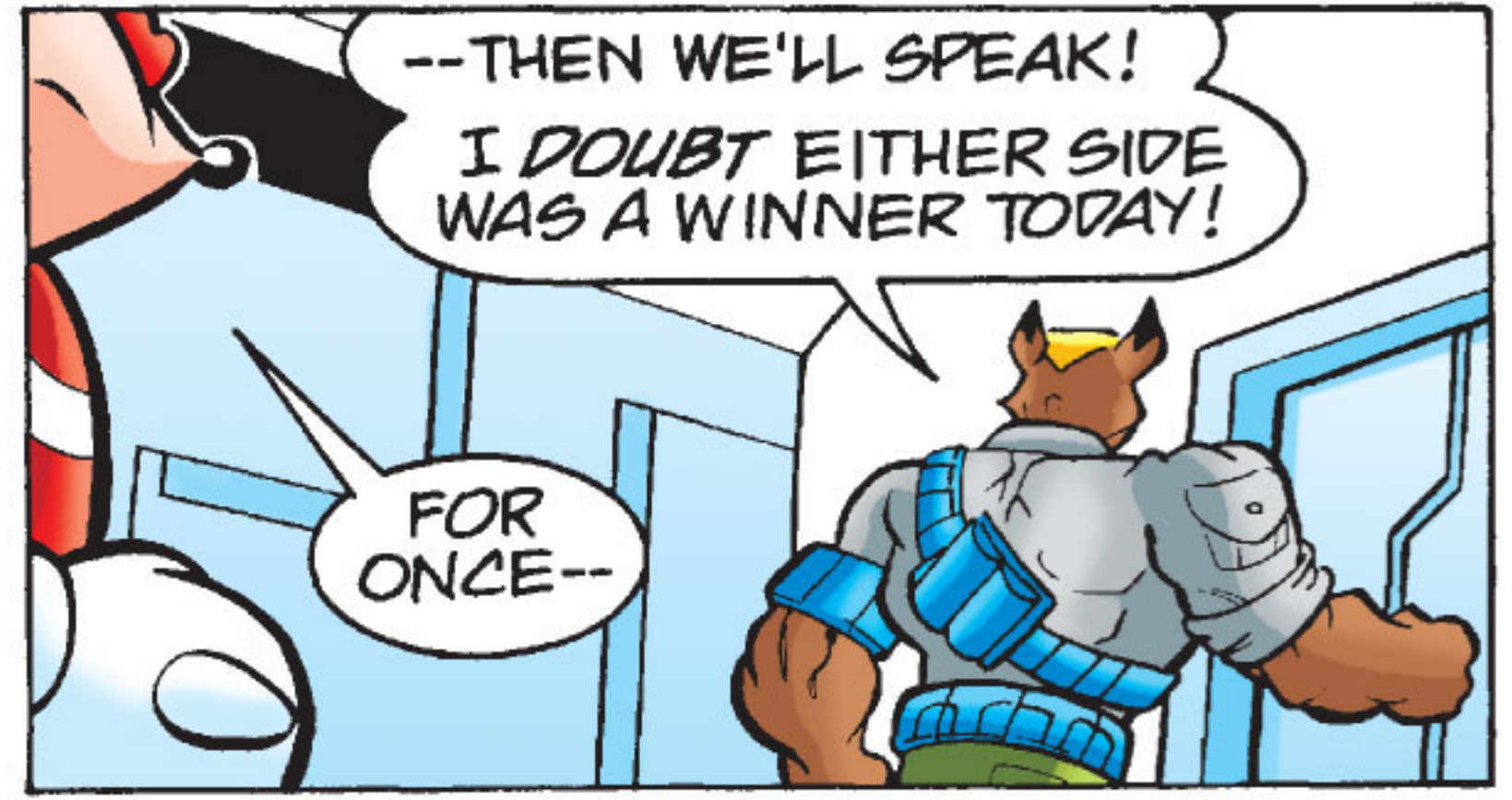
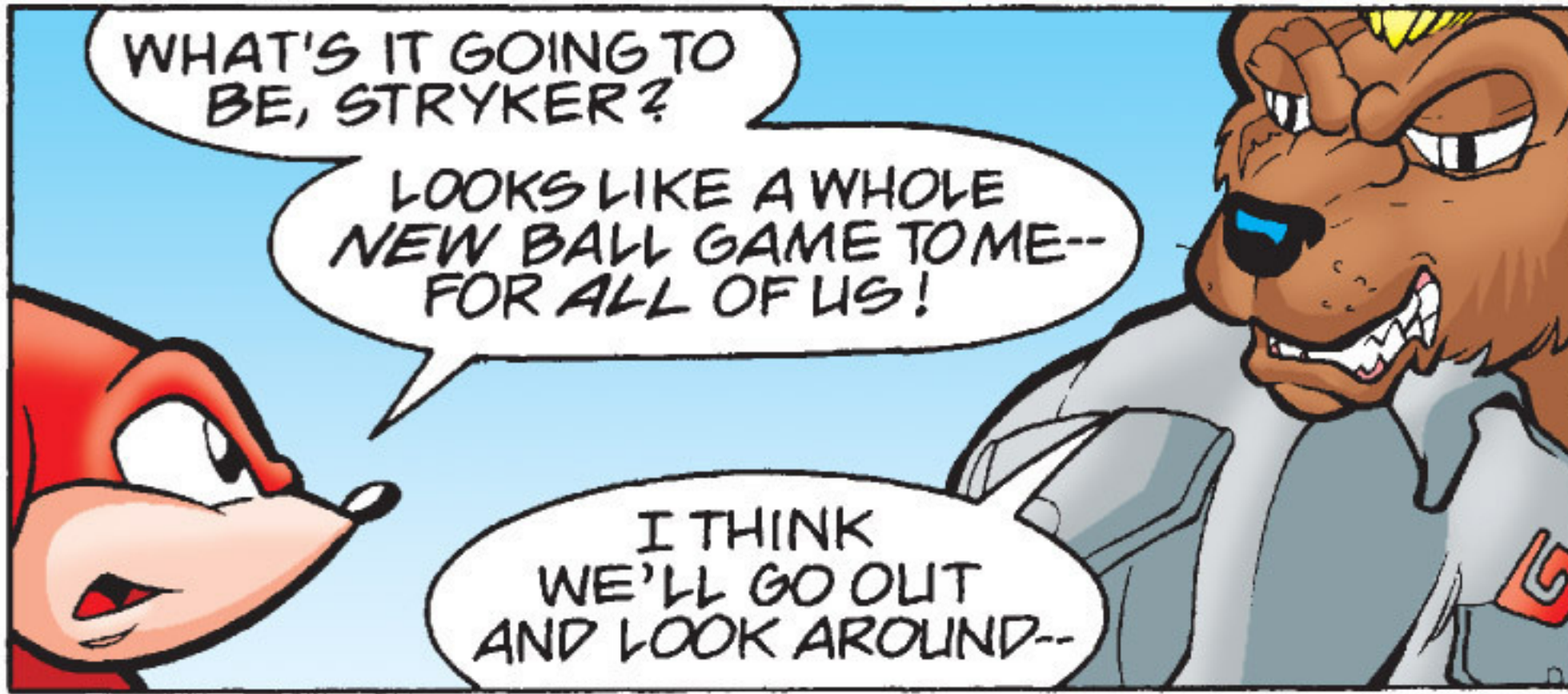
MOVE AWAY, GUARDIAN, SO I--

FIRST ONE TO SWING ANSWERS TO ME!

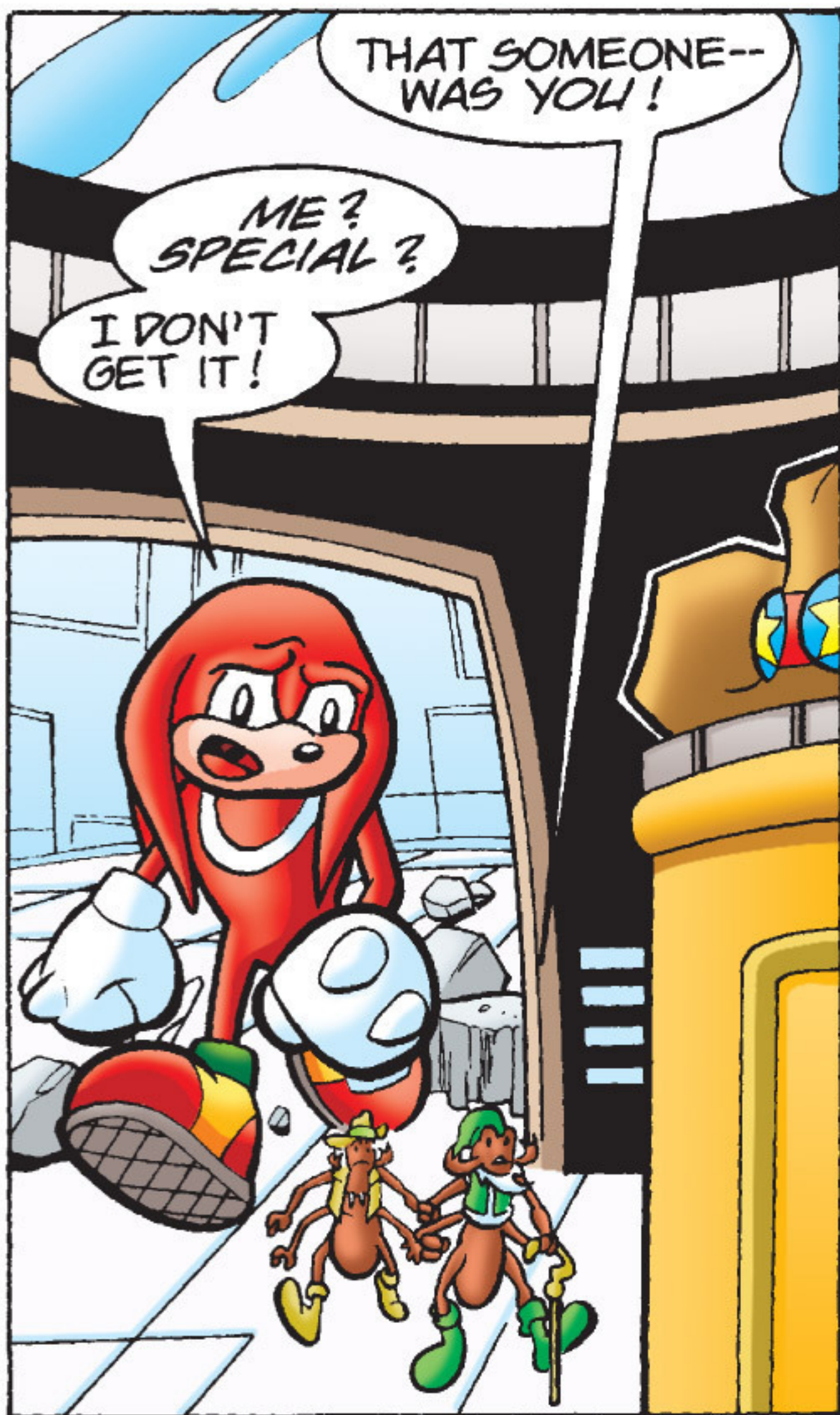
RIGHT ABOUT NOW, I FIGURE COOL THINKING IS CALLED FOR!







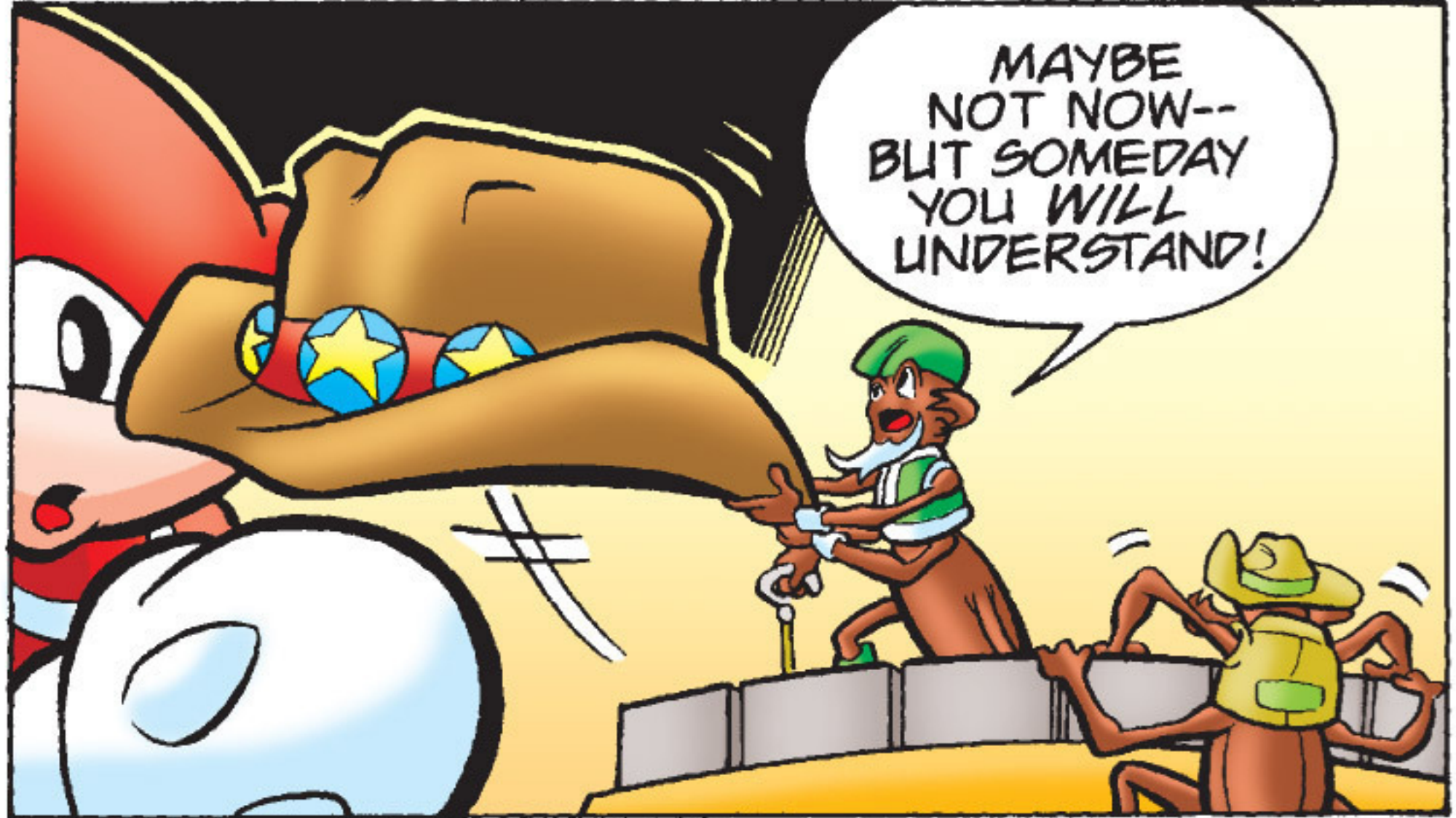




THAT SOMEONE-- WAS YOU!

ME? SPECIAL?

I DON'T GET IT!



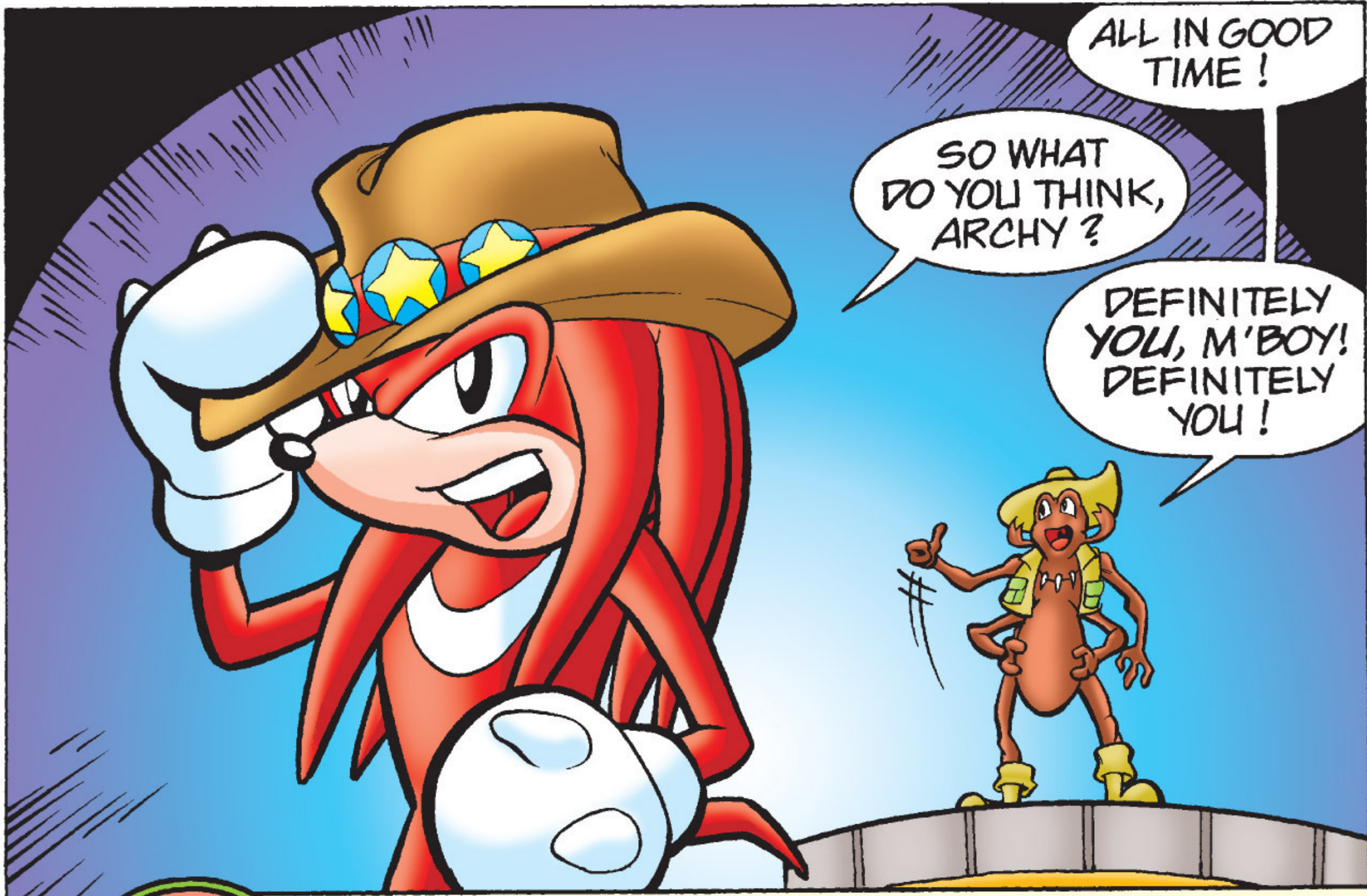
MAYBE NOT NOW-- BUT SOMEDAY YOU WILL UNDERSTAND!



HE'S GONE!

Y'KNOW-- THIS REALLY BURNS!  
TOO MANY QUESTIONS AND NOT ENOUGH ANSWERS!

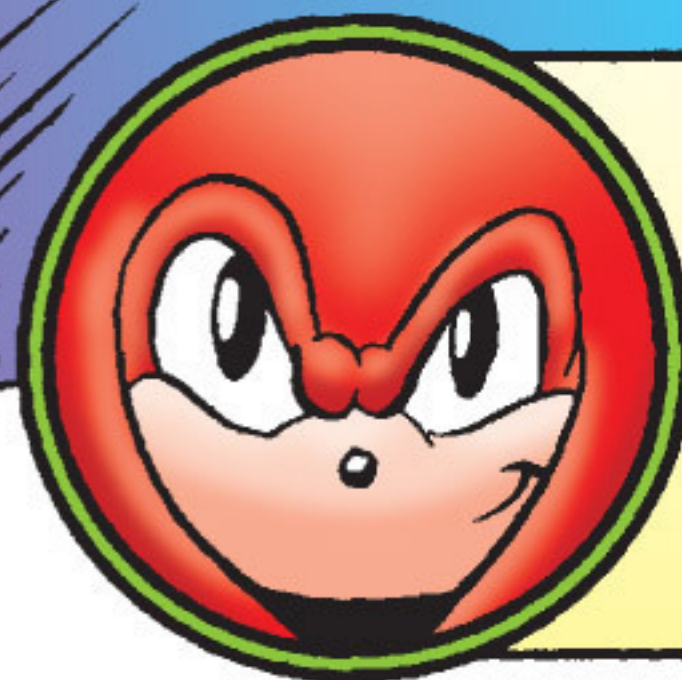
BAM!



ALL IN GOOD TIME!

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK, ARCHY?

DEFINITELY YOU, M'BOY!  
DEFINITELY YOU!



NEXT: THE RETURN OF **ENERJAK**, ALONG WITH **The Dark Legion!**

THE DINGOES SETTLE IN ECHIDNAOPOLIS! MORE SECRETS OF HAVEN! PLUS LARA-LE, JULIE-SU, ARCHIMEDES AND CHAOTIX, OHYEAH, WE THREW IN KNUCKLES AS A BONUS! BE HERE!